THE FORUM
FOR JULY 1912

EDITORIAL NOTES

IT would appear, from the daily papers, that for some time past the President of the United States and his predecessor in that office have been conducting a political campaign, in the interests of the country—viewed from different standpoints. No one would have imagined, from the peculiar nature of the interchanges, that a President or an ex-President was remotely connected with the proceedings. When the people begin to take a really effective share in the discussion, there will be some natural curiosity as to their attitude with regard to this travesty of tradition.

* * *

MR. TAFT has had an exceptionally unpleasant situation to face; and he has faced it, after long inertia, with painful results. It was right that he should try to make an effective rejoinder to the irresponsible accusations scattered broadcast to the winds. Yet the President knew his own temperament far better than it was known to his advisers, and it would have been wiser for him to persist in a policy of comprehensive silence, which may cover a multitude of littlenesses. To carry the war into the enemy's country, once, would certainly have sufficed; but to accuse himself by reiterated excuses, to accept, while feebly protesting, the regrettable tactics of his opponent, was an irreversible mistake. The President is not a competent fighter, by instinct or by training. He may do the right thing, but he selects the wrong time; while he has an unhappy facility for doing the wrong thing at any time. With normal conditions and a less unscrupulous rival he might have failed less obviously, or even apparently succeeded. As it is, he has succeeded only in failing completely.

* * *

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE American public has for some time been familiar with William Randolph Hearst; and familiarity has been more and more steadily breeding contempt. He has used the enormous power of publicity that he controls, not in the sole interest of truth, though incidentally he has attacked abuses and furthered reforms; not in the interests of the country, though incidentally he has returned to the country a slight proportion of the benefits that he has derived from it; not in the interest of the reasoning, reasonable public opinion, without which institutions and policies are unstable and delusive: but in the interests of personal aggrandizement, personal prestige and personal bargaining. Opportunities come and go; recur, and pass again. But in the long run, the man who single-heartedly and to the best of his ability tries to serve the public, will be recognized by the public and rewarded with their confidence. One cannot eliminate the personal equation. The most conscientious man may be wrong. But to speak the truth fearlessly as one sees it, and shame the devil in so far as he may be shamed—that is the least that can be required from any man who would intrude his opinions on general attention. Mr. Hearst has often spoken fearlessly; he has the courage and the resources that might have won him a secure place in the esteem of his countrymen. But he has not spoken the truth. When it suited him to try to mislead the people, he has tried to mislead them, deliberately, persistently. He has set before him no high ideal of public duty and public service; he has merely been obsessed by the idea of high office, and low standards. The latest instance of his unworthy use of publicity is his disgraceful campaign against Woodrow Wilson. No pretence was made to ascertain the truth and to present just conclusions from verified facts. By the cheapest type of malicious suggestion, by the crudest personalities, even by such absurdities as the attempt to distort past history to suit momentary political prejudices, the vilification of the fittest Democratic candidate was carried on so openly and shamelessly that even the special class of reader for whom the travesty was intended, revolted at the insult to his intelligence. Mr. Hearst believed that he could break the reputation of Governor Wilson into minute fragments, by vulgar ridicule, by innuendo, by the per-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

petual appeal to ignorance. Governor Wilson has emerged from the ordeal without any noticeable shattering. But William Randolph Hearst has so clearly asserted his claim to the contempt of the people, that no one will be found willing or able to dispute it.

* * *

IT would have been interesting to know Colonel Roosevelt's views with regard to a third-term candidacy, if he had not happened to be the third-term candidate.

* * *

THERE is a certain type of mind that, without being definitely conscious of its limitations, is always reluctant to allow praise to be diverted to any recipient not identified with the first person singular. Depreciatory remarks from such sources have already begun to circulate, with regard to the *Titanic* disaster: what the public has been content to call heroism, or a very fair substitute for heroism, these critics would question with faint smiles and the interrogation marks of uplifted eyebrows. They accentuate the individual cases of cowardice or inability to rise to an emergency; but they cannot recognize the grand total of courage that made itself apparent in that appallingly swift catastrophe. It was not, they imply, the ordinary decent instincts of manhood that caused the majority, unprepared and imperfectly acquainted with the magnitude and imminence of the disaster, to give what help they could, and then face death without panic; it was mere ignorance of the danger, or sheepish stupidity, or fear of the officers' revolvers. This is an unpleasant and unworthy attitude. It is impossible not to wish that more initiative had been shown; that some one had had the foresight and forcefulness, for example, to direct the construction of temporary rafts from some of the vast available stores of woodwork, and thus have saved, at the least, a few more lives. But so far as the passengers are concerned, the judgment of the world need not be reversed. Such unexpected catastrophes are not preceded by painstaking rehearsals; Fate throws them like a bomb into the banquet hall of life. Some of those who escaped have spoken with tears of ineffaceable impressions of selflessness

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and quiet bravery. There was little time to search for precedents in the records of memory, to lean upon recent and vivid examples. Those who found and justified themselves in that press of emotions, in that almost grotesque intrusion of tragedy upon the careless security of civilization, have set an example and furnished a standard by which others shall be measured, by which they shall support themselves, knowing, at least, what may be expected from them, now forewarned, since those others, unrehearsed and unprepared, yet played their parts so well in that drama of death.

* * *

If Colonel Roosevelt's judgment was so hopelessly at fault, as he now maintains, when he urged the nation to accept his last candidate for the Presidency, why should he expect the nation to place greater reliance on his judgment with regard to his present candidate, merely because that candidate is himself—condemned, by his own strenuous assertions, as an incompetent judge of men and affairs? It is a new doctrine that acknowledged incompetence as an adviser of the people should be accepted as evidence of special fitness to mislead them again.

* * *

The President has made many mistakes, but he had not quite prepared the public for such an inexcusable blunder as the publication of his confidential letter with regard to reciprocity and its consequences, as he viewed and desired them. It is possible to make too much of the mere wording; the objectionable "adjunct" phrase may only have expressed carelessly and loosely the belief that reciprocity would bring Canada and the United States into such intimate relations of mutual advantage that the one country might be considered "joined" to the other as clearly by commercial ties as by natural position. But no satisfactory defence can be offered for the offence against good faith, good taste and good will. A President is not supposed to express himself loosely and carelessly, and he must bear the blame of the most unpleasant construction that can legitimately be placed on his words. It is not easy to believe that Mr. Taft was actuated by underhand motives when he instituted the ne-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gotiations that proved futile; but, by his own avowal, he was not influenced by considerations that were creditable to American diplomacy or that could form an acceptable basis for American policy. The President deserves the censure that has been universally expressed, and he has now established two precedents that must be reversed unhesitatingly by his successor.

* * *

WHILE campaigning at Camden recently Colonel Roosevelt was in a rollicking mood. He told stories of his experiences in the "cow country"; and passed on to the war with Spain. "It wasn't much of a war," he said, "but it was all the war there was, and it wasn't my fault if there wasn't enough to go round." This is excruciatingly funny, especially as the Colonel made the same remark, in precisely the same terms, quite a long time before, in New York, on Memorial Day, May 30, 1911. Addressing the members of U. S. Grant Post 327 of Brooklyn, at Grant's Tomb, he said, referring to the Civil War veterans: "I took part in a little war which came after your big war. It wasn't much of a war, but it was all the war there was, and it was not our fault there wasn't enough to go round."

The Colonel's inability to make more trouble, in his humorous way, has evidently rankled, and the repetition of the schoolboy jest in the same schoolboy language, after the lapse of so many months, is conclusive evidence of the Colonel's peculiar fitness to publish the opinions that he expressed so emphatically about the arbitration agreements. Naturally, he would resent any proposals which would prevent such an amusing and invigorating pastime as civilized warfare, with civilized death and agony, from becoming a popular and general relaxation. His attitude on this laughable question strengthens his unobtruded claims to the admiration of posterity. In a world which is beginning to assume a grown-up viewpoint and to measure even the jokes of demagogues by grown-up standards, the ex-President retains unimpaired his splendid childishness. *Ingenui vultus puer ingenuique pudoris*. He certainly deserves a prize for his skill in delivering impromptus twelve months old.

* * *

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE public is long-suffering, but surely it is getting a little tired of being subjected in so many disputes to deliberately devised discomfort and inconsiderateness! The waiters' strike in New York is the most recent instance. No one will deny to the waiters the right to take any reasonable measures to improve the conditions of their work, which were certainly far from ideal. But their dispute, so far as can be gathered, was with the hotel proprietors, not with the public. A strike may or may not have been necessary; but it was not necessary to select for the demonstrative walk-out, wherever possible, the one time that would result in the greatest inconvenience to the patrons of the hotel. Yet the usual procedure was to wait until the tables were occupied and the orders received: at 7.15 the fateful whistle gave the signal to abandon the dining rooms and the diners. This was not a legitimate device of warfare: it was studied insolence —or, if not studied, still insolence: the insolence of careless, contemptuous indifference to the claims of those who have practically paid their wages. The idea, of course, was to attract wider publicity and to bring the utmost degree of pressure to bear upon the proprietors. But it is certainly time that the public began to do a little striking on its own account, since it is brought, willingly or unwillingly, but always to its disadvantage, into every dispute. The waiters are paid, as a class, more than they could obtain in any other occupation for which their qualifications, generally, would fit them. They have come to consider the generosity of the public as a normal source of income, to be accepted with superficial acknowledgments at ordinary times, and repaid with deliberate discourtesy when a little recognition of what was due from them would have brought appreciation and probably support. It is a pity that while the matter was being threshed out the whole system of tipping could not have been regulated. It has been asserted that the habit is fundamentally human. It may be; but it is certainly fundamentally vicious. One has a right to expect adequate service in a good hotel; and if the hotel rates are not sufficient to include that charge, they should be increased in proper proportion. It would be far better for the waiter himself to be paid regular wages than to rely on what is essentially a gambling chance,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

however much the law of averages may modify the chance or the rule of exceptions enlarge the income. Tipping is really as indefensible as it is un-American. It results in the organization of business undertakings on an entirely false basis. If the hotel management is already charging enough, it is enabled indirectly by the tipping system to charge more, and unfairly. If it is not charging enough, and cannot afford to pay its own servants itself, it should say so, and revise its rates. In the meantime those who have been subjected to special inconvenience by the strikers may very well show their appreciation by at least diminishing their tips in the hotels which have again employed the men who regarded the public merely as a lever with which to overcome the resistance of the proprietors.

* * *

ALTHOUGH it may appear unpleasant, or even ridiculous, to mention such details to civilized people with highly sensitive nerves, attention may be called to one point in the packing-house disclosures that has been overlooked or neglected: the raw material of these establishments happens to be live stock, with, curiously, certain susceptibilities to pain and certain rights to freedom from unnecessary torture. The public is properly concerned with the questions of cleanliness and food-fitness, with the safeguarding of its own health; but it may spare a few moments to inquire how many, out of the millions of animals slaughtered, are subjected to the process of skinning alive or to similar abominable and criminal mishandling. It is possible to allow unsentimentality to go to a further and more dangerous extreme than the much-decried sentimentality that is now out of fashion in literature and in life. No nation has a right to sanction meat-eating without being absolutely sure that humane and effective killing methods are compulsory. Due supervision is exercised in Germany, for example. Here, the time-factor—the necessity for not wasting those individual seconds that amount to a colossal total where hundreds or thousands of employees are concerned—has resulted in the most revolting practices. Human beings, in the mass, are not very courageous in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their shirking of responsibility for the remedying of notoriously inhuman conditions.

* * *

THE temper of Mr. Theodore Schroeder is the temper of the reformer who will devote a life to a cause, and who will let nothing divert him from the object he sets out to achieve. Mr. Schroeder is an enthusiast for liberty of speech, and he knows no other desire. It seems strange that any man should at this time of day still find it necessary to plead such a cause, especially in a country like the United States, where liberty is supposed to be the very atmosphere breathed by the people. Even a casual reading, however, of Mr. Schroeder's book, *Obscene Literature and Constitutional Law,* will convince any one that liberty of the press, in the United States, "is liberty only by permission, not liberty as a matter of right," and Mr. Schroeder claims the right both for himself and for his fellow-citizens.

It is a nice question how far the State may interfere with the individual's freedom in this respect, and the question becomes still more delicate if, in answering it, we must allow for prejudice, the habit acquired of long custom and that peculiar attitude of mind commonly called "decency." Especially is the question a difficult one in Anglo-Saxon countries, where the Reformation puritanized the minds of the reformed. Mr. Schroeder approaches the question at its most complicated side. He deals mainly with what is known as "obscene" literature, with the literature that society has made taboo. As regards the freedom to print such literature, the laws of the United States, he says, curtail the liberty of the press more perniciously and more extensively than it was curtailed in England at the time of the American revolution. We do not for one moment desire to question Mr. Schroeder's statement. He knows the laws of this country as they apply to this subject probably better than does any man. But to make the statement as an accusation and to enlist our sympathy in the accusation he should first convince us that the literature classed as "obscene" is either necessary or desirable. There is perhaps no word in the language so capable of different meanings to different people as this same

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

word " obscene." If we could once come to a common agreement as to what it properly should connote, there would be little difficulty about reforming laws in a really liberal spirit. But this is hardly possible under our present educational system of starved humanities. An enlightened and cultured public opinion as to " obscene " literature is the best remedy for the ills which follow on a confining legislation. To liberalize legislation such a public opinion is the one desideratum, and that public opinion is not obtained by legislation, but by education.

None the less Mr. Schroeder's book is a remarkable achievement, involving enormous labor, and it must, unquestionably, help to open the minds of people to the many real grievances under which we suffer and from which we would do wisely to free ourselves at the earliest opportunity. Many of the laws cited by Mr. Schroeder as being still in force, are stupid to the point of being ridiculous, and the sooner they are erased from the statutes the better will it be for our self-respect as a civilized community. They are the remnants of a paternal barbarism in government which held up flogging and corporal punishment as salutary to the wayward child.

* * *

WHATEVER swathings may have been wrapped around it, the mind of man will wander sooner or later, freely or cumbrously, in the realms of fancy. Science has provided an alphabet with which to fashion new words for the new thoughts: but alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, are still perplexing and luring. We have the symbols; but what do they symbolize? How many gallant adventurers have set out for the discovery of these poles of human endeavor, and returned unsatisfied? Equipped with the ideas instilled in us in our childhood, or that we inherit with the race, or acquire from society, we find it difficult to cross the defending ice and the barren desolations. There have been many claims of success; but the proofs would not bear investigation.

Whether we believe the dogmas of the churches, or stand aloof and questioning, or openly scoff, we come together at last for the same quest. Man is mortal: man is immortal. What

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

does it mean—or is there no answer to the riddle of the universe? The theosophist will speak—but he does not intrude his speech—of Karma and reincarnation: in the apparent inconsistencies and injustices of nature, he finds a perpetual balance of opportunity and achievement, of retribution and reward. Every man is his own master, indeed, and his own judge: his own maker, and his own destroyer. He may forget the continuity of his existence, yet always he finds himself in circumstances that are the logical consequence of past actions. His advantages and drawbacks were created by himself. He is perpetually repairing, atoning; striving on, or slipping further down. Yet, however speciously the doctrine be explained, it is difficult to avoid the emphasis that must be placed on the first life—though a first life is apparently impossible in the endless chain. "Free Will" is a slippery subject: it has received more than its share of discussion in the past. But whatever conditions may be determined by the inexorable demands of a former life, mental conditions are most inevitably and obviously determined. At any rate, there would seem to remain no possible standards of criticism, condemnation or approval. Is the sweated factory girl atoning for the luxurious idleness and selfishness of a previous incarnation? Is the plutocrat with his millions and his mansions enjoying a welcome change from servitude and a hovel? These are idle thoughts, and probably permit an easy rejoinder. Yet theosophy—on its principle of once human, always human—would seem, at least, to leave the animals somewhat forlorn.

* * *

In New Zealand, where women enjoy the franchise, the recent referendum on the question of a national prohibition of the liquor traffic resulted in 255,864 votes in favor of the measure and 202,608 against. The votes in favor of national prohibition thus amount to 55.93 per cent. of the total votes polled. The proportion required to carry the proposal is 60 per cent.

* * *

A committee of experts, under the presidency of Captain Swinton, is now considering designs for the reconstruction of the City of Delhi, which, as announced by King George at the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Durbar, is to be the future administrative centre of India, to revive the old and strengthen the new imperial associations. Only once before has such a task been carried out on a really great scale, and when the City of Washington was laid out its designer was a Frenchman. Sir Christopher Wren's grandiose plan for the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire was never given fulfilment; but Captain Swinton and his associates will be more fortunate, and the new city is expected to be a reality within a few years—probably five or six. Before long there will be another great opportunity for the city-builder, when the Federal capital of Australia is designed. Many men have thrown their genius into the fashioning of a great building, but to be the architect of a new metropolis is a rare and fascinating task. The work will be watched throughout the world with more than casual interest; and not a few of those whose creative inspiration is limited to normal, narrow scope will follow with something of envy the use or abuse in other hands of these opportunities for immortality.

* * *

THE obvious is not often interesting; but this excuse for inattention would not apply to the political drama that is slowly nearing its climax in Austria-Hungary. There are many possibilities, and nearly all of them are perplexing. The dual monarchy needs the counsel and coöperation of its wisest statesmen if the difficulties of the present are to be overcome and the dangers of the future averted. The Hungarian Administration, recently embarrassed by the threat of the Emperor-King to abdicate the throne of Hungary if his prerogative of calling out the reserves were interfered with, has also been confronted with franchise troubles, a demand having been made for a measure which would deprive the Magyars, who are in a numerical minority, of the chief voice in the control of their country.

The grievances of Croatia are not serious, but they add to the unrest. The majority of the inhabitants are either Serbs or close of kin to the Serbs; and though Croatia is generally regarded as a dependency of Hungary, enjoying home rule under

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a "Ban" appointed by the King of Hungary and sending representatives to the Hungarian Lower Chamber, the Croatians resent the suggestion of dependence and assert that the King of Hungary is King of Croatia, not by right of conquest, or any right other than the free choice of Croatia. The matter is mainly theoretical; but the feeling aroused may at any time become an awkward factor in practical politics. The existence of an independent and mismanaged Servia complicates the problem.

The question of the dynasty is of course dominant. The Archduke Ferdinand does not face a pleasant outlook, and he may find the penalties of a morganatic marriage rather tragical. The Emperor-King himself, great as his services have been, has never quite adapted himself to the requirements of the Hungarian situation. He is too much of a Habsburg to be seen at his best in Buda-Pesth. But he has averted many dangers. A country so complex in constitution, so heterogeneous, cannot be held together without a strong centralizing influence; while comparatively recent events show that the nations of Europe cannot yet be relied upon to suppress covetousness when temptation and opportunity unite.

* * *

At the time of writing, the events of the future are naturally not well known. A sorry object lesson is being presented at Chicago; but it is impossible to make an intelligent forecast of what may happen, when so little intelligence has been shown by either side in what has already been completed. If Colonel Roosevelt should by any chance obtain the nomination, a Democratic President should be assured. If Mr. Taft emerges victoriously, and the disruption of the party does not follow, there may be time before the election for animosities to fade and for recriminations to lose their virulence. The public will not readily forget the unseemly wrangle; but Mr. Taft would have still another opportunity to rise to the occasion.

But prophecy or persuasion is useless when it will not be read until after the event. It is sufficient to hope for the best, and be prepared for the worst.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SOIRÉE KOKIMONO

HENRY G. ALSBERG

NO! Most remarkable . . . the whole business, y'know. . . . Most remarkable evenin's entertainment ever was at, this Soirée Kokimono of Morton Severan's. Dizzy yet in the uppers. . . . An' y'know, sort of fallen angel pain in the cardiac region, Adam-an'-Eve-takin'-a-last-look-from-the-outside sort of feelin'. I'm not keen on rhapsodies, y'know, but that Severan's a reg'lar world's wonder, a Petronius, Louis the Fourteenth, and Huysmans rolled into one, with all the latest modern facilities for actin' the part. . . . D'you know him? No? . . . Mysterious millionaire materializin' out of the great negligible West; made's coin, they say, in a turquoise mine, by the lump, y'know, crusty with gold matrix, an' that sort of thing. What he's after, nobody knows, . . . he bein' unattached, . . . no wimmin-folks whatever. . . . He's got us guessin'. Takes the Halloran place, reg'lar white elephant, off the estate's hands, an' starts in to make the old Cliff sit up and take notice . . .

Don't know him? No? Most extraordinary lookin' cove . . . one of Whistler's shadow-portraits come to life, . . . mostly like that one of Sarasate, way off, up on a stage, in the shadow, . . . except for the diabolic glow from footlights of nether regions glarin' up at him; black as the devil, yet not satanic exactly. . . . except for the tired, Byronesque look of the drooping eye; . . . not as tall as he looks; . . . voice soft as Caruso's, but punctures holes of silence into Babel when he cares to talk, . . . which isn't often. . . . Yet I sort of double back to his eye as most notable, . . . world-weary an' reveryish an' that sort of thing, though capable of turnin' live coal on provocation, . . . you feel sure . . .

Why I was invited, or why I came, I can't really tell. Same with the others. Fact, I don't believe that the half of us would 'a' showed up but for the mystery of the man an' the affair. . . . Y'know, cards out of a clear sky, sayin' only "Soirée Kokimono," . . . not a word more. An' so we all came, buzzin' with curiosity an' wonderin' what 'twas to be; an' at that, we

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were feelin' a bit ashamed an' foolish for comin', thinkin' that, after all, 'twould be nothin' but a sort of Japanese garden party, with lots of paper lamps an' geisha girls (from the Hippodrome), an' samisens or what-d'ye-call-'ems, an' tea an' expensive *cloisonnée* souv'niers that you keep knockin' off mantelpieces with your elbow. . . . We were half awaitin' disappointment an' half hopin' for the unexpected that never happens . . . only this time it took a notion to . . .

When we arrived, they ushed us up through the big hall, . . . y'member? . . . most distressin'ly Grant period, walnut slabs of panellin' goin' round an' round in a nightmare of fancy grainin' . . . in a reg'lar Circassian frenzy, . . . an' all polished up high like a push-cart apple, an' copper chandeliers twisted an' tortured an' curled like a Welsh-rarebit vision, an' the turkey-red carpet an' the ceiling with plaster reliefs of bunches of grapes smotherin' bunches of cherubim, . . . all colored in the bright aniline dyes of the period. Well, there wasn't anythin' changed; Marg'ry Daunce, who was just ahead of me, shrugged her shoulders (she's always shruggin' 'em, till you feel like slappin' her), an' remarked . . . "*she* considered it an impertinence of the man." . . . In fact there was a reg'lar murmur of disapproval from one an' sundry, a sort of muttered demand for money back, in the air. Everybody had expected the least Severan could do was to call in Flabadoriau an' have him do the house over for our benefit . . . regardless.

So they took us along, as we dribbled in, through that unspeakable hall, into the big mornin' room overlookin' the terrace an' the ocean. Well, here, anyway, there was a change. Y'member that chamber of horrors? All over now. . . . . A little surprisin'. . . . Made us all gasp. . . . Out of the sticky Grant period into dim emptiness. . . . By Jove! Most surprisin'! . . . All the heavy plaster ripped out, an' the room done over in gray panellin's, fadin' off like false dawn, from dark to light to silver white. The ceiling was a pearly shadow like the sky on a misty day. No windows, . . . but just gray panels, like the rest of the room, where that bulgin' outrage of a bow-window used to be. But outside, yellow blobs through the panels, like gas lamps in a fog, were lanterns throwin' a soft glare into that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cool, misty room, warmin' it up like sunlight. . . . An' somewhere beyond, you could dimly hear an' see mysterious goin's on, subdued voices, . . . a bit of laughter, . . . shadows hurryin' to an' fro . . . an' the distant boom of the unseen Atlantic, like Fifth Avenue from the top of the club. . . . But inside, absolute emptiness an' quiet. . . . No lights except what filtered through from outside, . . . no sound, . . . not a splotch of decoration, not a stick of furniture except some small, coral-pink mats strewn about the brown floor, and little tabourets next to 'em for holdin' refreshments. . . .

We were all impressed, the wimmin-folks a bit gushy about it, ravin' to Severan (standin' tall an' shadowy, in the further end of the room) about the poetry of simplicity, the restfulness of perfect harmony; an' a few, especially Marg'ry Daunce, makin' a bid for names of decorator an' costs. That woman would hold up George V, I. R., for statistics of the Durbar, an' the next week have a little Durbarette of her own on her front lawn. . . . Not but what she's handsome, in a sort of a way; lovely back, y'know, which she's always obtrudin', . . . an' real . . . we-ell . . . I grab-bag into my French an' pull out *élan* for decency's sake. . . . Only Alda Wayre (don't know her? heroine of the Wayre-Mortine affair, tall, painfully thin, cavernous eyes, self-consumed by inner flame an' that sort of thing, lean-jawed an' hungry as a night-huntin' puma; don't know her? Why, man, where've you been? The noise of it reached the other side, even kicked up quite a muss on the other side, I'm told). . . . Well, anyway, Alda Wayre turned her back (not a bad back either, though a trifle skinny), on Severan with a contemptuous shrug. Not a word of praise or blame out of her. . . . But then she'd act that way in Aladdin's hall of diamonds. Nothin', y'know, matters with her except the supreme matter, at which we all burn our fingers. (I'm a bit mixed; I'm still dizzy.) It's the only game she plays at, and she plays at it like a big black cat stalkin' a sparrow. . . .

But Severan's no simpleton, either. He'd play the game "Which Hand Holds the Bean" tip-top. Goes you one better, psychologically, every time. He had his eye on her; but her little trick of disdain didn't bring him up on his hind-legs beggin'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for sugar. He goes on quietly talkin' to one and all, very courteous an' grand an' mysterious, sort of Monte Cristoesque, y'know, hidalgo politeness, but no subserviency to any, nor satisfaction to nosiness. Tells each and every, he's glad to have 'em (there were a dozen couples, not a big party, y'know), and makes 'em feel it, too. By and by, enters a fat little Jap, with jolly, smilin' countenance (like an apple; so Marg'ry calls him Mr. Apple-Jap), an' outspread hands, doin' the master of ceremonies act. In real Darlin' of the Gods style requests us to be honorably seated. Severan sets example. Squats down on little mat. We all, with more or less difficulty, follow suit. Lucky, y'know, that styles are what they are, and most of the wimmin were sort of slender; else there might ha' been some crackin' an' splinterin' of whale-bone. As it was, we all got safely and comf'tably down (I next to Marg'ry Daunce, somehow or 'nother), Severan (in spite of her uppishness, she engineered it), next to Alda Wayre with the cavernous eyes. Now out goes our fat little entertainer, comes in again with a tray with two cups of tea an' some preserves, which he sets down in front of a couple, on a tabouret. As he does so, he says, in Madame Butterfly lingo, some little complimentary trifle to the lady, such as: "Somewheres on road to Yamote, blooms, Honorable Lady, cherry tree of delicious fragrance to weary wayfarer. . . . Since twenty years have not thought of it . . . not till now, . . . till this star-moment in night of long years, August Madame." . . . He accompanies this with grave little bow, which reveals the tan baldness of his pate; runnin' back, like the broad sole of a bed-slipper, into the bristly, black stubble of his hair. Or again he says, as he brings tea to some other guest, "In other life, Lady, assuredly will be glowin' moon-moth, and kuroyuma ghosts will pursue, with out-of-breath eagerness, across rice fields, but Lady will laugh at them, loftily swingin' from pine-needle, balancin' over sea." . . .

Really, it was all very nice, the soft murmur of his voice, tinklin' delightful, sandal-woody compliments, and the rustle of his kimono through the cool, dim room. Outside now, a samisen began to mew plaintively, and a woman's voice to squeal in Jap falsetto, like a locust's shrillin', but too soft to be nerve-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wrackin'. . . . Somehow we felt quite exotic (not hectically so, but sort of comfortably Pierre-Lotish). . . . An' then the tea was really, well, a sort of distilled odor of tea . . . quite wonderful, y'know, . . . an' the preserved fruits . . . the girls all were crazy about 'em . . . eatin' 'em with little shrieks of greed an' gettin' their rouged finger-tips all dabby with 'em. . . . An', well, I've a notion Severan had p'raps . . . maybe, of course, 'twas the night and the later doin's, . . . but p'raps he'd had 'em put a little somethin', dream-makin' stuff, into the tea an' preserves. Of course I don't know, but things did get to look sort of rosy an' intense an' glorified after that; an' Marg'ry Daunce a bit more goddessy an' allurin' an' less vulgar. . . . But nobody was sayin' anythin' more but the commonplaces, all lookin' at each other out of the corners of their eyes, sort of experimentin' with their intensified vision. Only Alda Wayre was leanin' forward, projectin' her hungry chin forward on her hand, an' eatin' Severan up with her eyes, an' he smilin' back at her, like a twilight shadow flung down into a cavernous night. (I wax impressionistic, or what is the latest, pointillist, or Cézannesque? I'm guessin'.) . . .

By this time, all bein' served, with tea an' preserves, . . . the samisen an' singin' breaks off, an' our Jap friend, standin' in the middle of the floor, rubbin' his hands, an' bowin' profoundly, begins a long discourse, my vulgar friend would call it a spiel, on some Jap fairy tale or 'nother, all about samurai gentlemen an' fairy ladies an' demons, etc. . . . I'm not strong on folklore. . . . But he was a quite fetchin' entertainer, describin' native doin's in a gentle voice with a fetchin' sort of vividness. But the upshot of it all was the same's in our own fairy tales, the good ones inherited the plum orchards, an' the bad ones got the hook, or Jap words to that effect, bein' turned into somethin' new an' strange. Though, bein' Jap sinners, under those easy bosses, Buddha an' Kwannon, they were mercifully turned into ghosts, with lamps under their wings, flyin' around the world at night, glimmin' pathetically at unattainable affinities. . . . Hence fire-flies, . . . which it is good luck to catch an' pin in the loved one's hair, for the winkin' light of them makes her more desirable than a wood-nymph, and as reciprocatin' as . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well, as need be. An' then he announced, in his egg-shell, satsuma Anglo-Saxon, that we were to have a fire-fly hunt right off. . . . Explainin' the rules of the game as he does so, he deals out little bamboo-handled nets to all of us. An Honorable Lady, and a most August Sir, pairin' off in pursuit, toddle to a nearby tree an' knock the little twinklers off the leaves an' branches with the handles of their nets, an' then gather the little fellers up an' stick 'em into their mouths. (When the girls shrieked at this, old party explained that the bugs were quite sanitary an' all that, an' holdin' 'em in your hands till you got enough to make a show would only kill 'em.) Or again a lady an' gent go stormin' into clouds of 'em, like into aerial schools of mackerel, an' sweep 'em up by the netful. . . . The fire-flies are to be released in bunches out of net cages, shortly, an' then let all trip forth to the intoxicatin' sport of fire-fly huntin'. . . .

So sayin', he flourishes his pudgy hand like a magician, the transparent panels that face out toward the ocean, reverse silently, openin' the whole side of the room to out-o'-doors. . . . I tell you, as we tripped forth onto the terrace, we did quite a bit of chatterin' an' laughin' an' anticipatin', lookin' a bit scared, too, into each other's eyes. The game was a new one on all of us. . . . Possibilities limitless. . . . An' that somethin' or other in the . . . in what we'd had (if it wasn't just my imagination) made us a bit scared of each other an' ourselves. . . .

It was quite an evenin'. The sea spread out gray an' hazy at our feet under its roof of faintin' stars. . . . An' opposite, a drunken, pumpkin-lookin' moon comin' up over the shoulder of what's 's name's outrageous Norman castle on the further cliff. . . . A sort of a layer of brume, like the gauze they use in the opera at Siegfried's death march, to represent mist, hung over the great lawn and clumps of trees an' shrubberies. . . . As for noise, only the distant, metropolitan roar of the ocean, and nearby, the glug-glug an' slurf-slurf of runnin' water, an' the faint but most extraordinarily sweet chorus of cricket song, almost like a muted orchestra of hummin' birds playin' for the rise of the curtain. ('Twas imported singin' cicada, from Japan, I found out afterward, turned loose by thousands on the place.) And through the trees you got a gleam of stars

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in a bit of elusive lake off in the woods somewhere. . . .

An' then they gave us no time for gush or canned poetry, but dozens of little figurines came hurryin' out of nowhere onto the lawn, openin' little net-covered cages an' turnin' loose little clouds of fire-flies. At first it had no effect; just's as illuminatin' as an usher's glim in the Colosseum. But then, as more an' more unrolled, they did begin to make things glow, castin' a reflection up into the sky like a bit of Coney Island, an', at the same time, illuminatin', with a million twinkles, the low-lyin' haze till it looked all phosphorescent like sea-water sprayed into the air. An' still they kept turnin' loose those twinkle ghosts of Buddha. . . . An' that low-lyin' curtain of mist became a cloud of soft-glowin' brightness like a livin' fairyland after Maxfield Parrish, an' none of us would a' been a bit 'stonished to see Queen Titania an' her whole Court come trippin' out to dance under that caressin' roof of woolly brightness. An' still they kept openin' up cages of imprisoned sinners' souls. Just like when I was a boy at fireworks, I kept sayin' to myself, "How long can it last, O Lord? There ain't any more fire-flies in the world. This man's a reg'lar Nero on 'em . . . a king's ransom for fire-flies." . . . An' I heard Marg'ry drawin' in her breath like a sob, whisperin', "An' all imported from Japan!" . . . The whole air was full of 'em now . . . sparklin' in the sky, the trees, an' the bushes, turnin' the world into a bit of *cloisonnée,* with the sky spark-studded, an' the trees an' all, flat designs against the spark-spray. . . . An' it spread far out to sea, trailin' dimly over the gray-blackness into night. . . .

We stood gapin' an' awe-struck, when 'twas all done, wonderin' whether we'd have the nerve to plunge into that glowin' little furnace of 'em hangin' over the lawn. . . . Then Marg'ry (she's always a bit of a gypsy), pulled me by the sleeve, so that the next minute I found myself stumblin' down the steps after her. Then the rest came. At first we were a bit scared, blinded, dazed, findin' it hard to do anythin' with the strange implements in our hands. We felt like children put into the parlor an' told to play make-believe—with our elders watchin' to see how cute we'd behave. Archie Downs was the first to make an effectual killin', scoopin' up a netful out of the air. Of course he lost

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most of 'em, but saved a handful. An' it was funny to see 'em shinin' through his fingers like an X-ray. Right off all the wimmin were round him, clamorin' for 'em; but, bein' first-fruits on the market, he held 'em high, for the price of bein' allowed to stick 'em into the lady's hair. . . . Herta Allison made the successful bid, an', I s'pose for fear of her coiffure comin' down, let him keep his hands in her hair quite a second. It was only when she saw the danger signals in his eyes, that she pulled away with a laugh, her hair mussed a bit an' a regular twinklin' spider-web of gossamer.

That, of course, set us all off, the men anxious for layin' on of hands, the girls pretendin' to be scared, but really crazy to be made look like fairy-queens. At first we ran in a crowd, herdin' together like a pack of playin' puppies after a ball. One would rush up to a twinklin' tree, beat its branches with his net, an' then go down on his hands an' knees, collectin' the sparklers into his mouth (sure enough the only way not to crush 'em). Then all the others would come pantin' an' gigglin' an' whisperin' up to help gather. An' there we'd all be on our knees, like people listenin' to the grass grow, an' our mouths little shinin' balloons of light in the darkness (things weren't nearly so bright as they'd looked at first. An' the night was fast swallowin' up Severan's jail-delivery). An' then we'd release the quarry into our hands an' fling it at each other, the wimmin as well as the men. My head was a halo for the first time, an' Marg'ry's curls (y'know she's got nice hair) were a reg'lar nimbus of phosphorescence. An' the wimmin-folks' dresses—bein' net an' silk an' what-not—shone an' twinkled an' glittered like samples of the Milky Way.

After a little, though, the crowd began to split up into groups, movin' like shadows across the plushy lawn, this way an' that, with scared little laughs an' cries of wimmin. Gradually things got more separated, voices more distant; only a startlin' laugh now an' then, an' the soft boom of temple bells, which were hung low from the trees so you hit 'em as you passed under, gave sign of human life,—not much more insistent than the slurf of the brook or the crickets' night-song. . . . Somehow, Marg'ry an' I'd gotten off by ourselves. We'd been shakin'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the twinklin' fruit off a squat little tree growin' like a big mushroom by the toy lake, an' somehow, the strange odors (they'd let loose reg'lar exotic, sense-ravishin' odors all over the place, reg'lar Champak, Shelley effect, y'know), an' the fadin' haze of fire-flies, an' the slurf an' gurgle of runnin' water, an' the mellow tonk of bells swirlin' about us, an' the shrill, nymph-laughter-fountains, all drove me crazy, an', before I knew it, I had Marg'ry in my arms an' I was showerin' her face with star showers out of my mouth—her eyes, her cheeks, her hair—an' like Siegfried, my mouth, through flyin' sparks, found hers an'—how does old Shake say it?—grew there as if forever. . . .

Well, of course y'know Marg'ry. An' after a soul-kissesh elapse, she preserved the proprieties an' broke away an' fled, a twinklin' ghost, across the little toy bridge over the toy lake. I up an' followed her, but she disappeared, like a fairy, into a clump of woods. I, now havin' had enough of exotic delirium, an' oriental exalts, for the nonce, after makin' a feint of pursuit, just round myself up for a bit of quiet communion with my soul an' the smoke of a cigarette, the latter bein' indispensable even in Nirvana, or whatever they call their knock-out heaven. . . .

The tipsy moon was already bein' swallowed up by a turret of what's 's name's Gothic outrage, havin' only looked up for an hour or so to leer at the exotic doin's of mortals. It was gettin' quite pitchy dark, the fire-flies havin' faded out a good deal over the landscape . . . I was thinkin' it would be fine an' coolin' an' calmin' to contemplate the polyphlosboio (bit of Exeter paint still stickin', my boy) over my cigarette. So I thought I'd slowly stroll over to the cliff-edge an' meditate. . . . I was makin' for it in a leisurely way, when a woman's deep voice (softer an' deeper than the temple bells), set the air about me vibratin' to tragedy. The woman herself was hidden by the trees, an' so was the person she addressed.

"You think I won't dare? . . . I haven't the nerve?"

"Yes,—you might." It was a man speakin' now. "But it would be a pity."

The man's voice sounded far away, reveryish; the woman's shook with concentrated rage. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Why shouldn't I? . . . You wouldn't care."

There was a sort of appealin' hope in that. . . .

"It would be a pity,"—the man spoke,—"a perfect evenin', an' you the most perfect thing in it. . . . A perfect dream turned into a nightmare."

"You're laughin' at me."

"No. Not at you more than at the whole business, at myself, the stars, an' the universe."

"Then why, *why*——?" she choked on a half-sob.

"Why, why, *why?* . . . That's it. . . . One tries to lay one's ghosts, I suppose. The air round about one's full of them. . . . An' one doesn't succeed, that's all."

There was a pause. . . . An ambitious cricket filled in the silence, runnin' from a piano trill right up to the shrillest fury of fortissimo. It was for all the world like incidental music at a melodrama when the express train is comin' to run down the heroine. . . .

I heard the rustlin' of a woman's dress, the sound of a struggle, a man's low laugh, then a breathless exclamation of despair from the woman's lips. . . . An' again silence, just in time for that infernal cricket to get in some more of his appropriate shiver music.

"Severan!"—this time the woman's voice was low an' hoarse an' dyin', like the trailin' end of a sky-rocket—"Severan!" . . .

There was no answer to this.

"Well, you'll see if I dare!"

There was again the rustlin' of silks, an' a noise of leaves an' branches bein' pushed aside. An' the man's voice callin', "Not to-night,—not to-night!" . . .

Then Mrs. Wayre comes hurryin' past me out into the open. She's runnin' toward the cliff. . . . The night was too dark now for me to get more than the green-white glint of her face as she flashed by; but her eyes burnt through me like torches,—a wild animal's at bay,—an' her clenched hands were raised toward the sky in a gesture of agonized supplication. . . .

I rushed after her to prevent the seemin' inevitable. . . .

Then, out of the stillness of the night, sounded a shrill, long-drawn-out whistle.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It was a summons to hidden powers. In an instant the whole world was flooded with light. It was as if the earth had opened down to its volcanic fires, out of which now poured a streamin' furnace-glow, demolishin' night an' darkness completely. How it was done I don't know, but, at the catch of a breath, the stars an' outer darkness, which they perforated, were wiped out altogether. I stood in a glare of brightness. Lights, lights everywhere. Every leaf of every bush an' shrub became a beetle of light, an' the trees huge set pieces of dazzlin' jewelry. An' overhead seemed roofed with a dome of light, like an *n*th power opera house. You were blinded by the brilliance so you couldn't see anythin' distinctly, like a kid that's brought out of bed into the lit-up parlor. . . . Only the sea, beyond the cliff, stayed imposin' lookin', glarin' up like hammered brass, under the reflection of lights, every angry wavelet clear an' metallic an' threatenin'. . . .

An', simultaneously with the illumination, arose the wild, confused sound of many Eastern instruments, Chinese lutes, drums, cymbals, an' then whole bevies of geishas came whirlin' out onto the lawn, in kaleidoscope groups, like wind-swept chrysanthemums, in long-flutterin' lines, like ribbon kite-tails, surroundin' us all with joined hands, challengin' us with chirruppy cries an' artificial smiles. For a moment I made the attempt to break through their dev'lish insistence and reach Mrs. Wayre. But it was no use,—like strugglin' against a pudgy destiny. An' then, the romance, the tragedy of things seemed so silly in the midst of this gigglin' kaleidoscope . . . death so improbable.

With the rest, I allowed myself to be herded by exotic beauty, amid protestin' laughter, onto the terrace and into the house. The panels slid shut behind us. We were in the cool, gray-lantern-stained room again. Intuitively, without knowin' what we were doin', we sank down on our mats once more. The fever seemed to have left us. The night an' its strange doin's seemed to be cut off by the gray panels like dreams from life by wakin'. . . . Strange . . . I was sittin' next to Marg'ry again. . . . We neither of us looked at the other. A queer, peaceful feelin' seemed to have taken hold of us all, sort of wrapped-about feelin', as if by a nice, fur-lined cloak. . . . A faint quaver of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a samisen was heard for a moment or two, and then petered out. . . . Our little, shinin'-faced Jap came hurryin' in once more, carryin' tea. We sipped it in a trance like, without emotion, lookin' back on the night as on one of Robert Louis' Pacific Island yarns. . . .

Severan at last set his cup down on the tabouret, . . . Mrs. Wayre (she was next to him, after all, an' not floatin', a ghastly corpse, face up in the chilly sea), was gazin' at Severan with great, burnin' eyes, as though she were tryin' to guess the answer to him for her soul's salvation. . . .

"I am very grateful, to all of you, I am sure," says Severan at last, in his shadowy, indoor voice, "for havin' taken part in, an', therefore, havin' embellished—my—little—Japanese dream."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE OVENS

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

HE trailed along the cinder-track
Beside the sleek canal, whose black
Cold slinking waters shivered back
Each frosty spark of starry light:
And each star pricked, an icy pin,
Through his old jacket worn and thin:
The raw wind rasped his shrinking skin
As if stark-naked to its bite;
Yet, cutting through him like a knife,
It would not cut the thread of life;
But only turned his feet to stones
With red-hot soles, that weighed like lead
In his old broken boots. His head,
Sunk low upon his sunken chest,
Was but a burning, icy ache
That strained a skull which would not break
To let him tumble down to rest.
He felt the cold stars in his bones;
And only wished that he were dead
With no curst, searching wind to shred
The very flesh from off his bones—
No wind to whistle through his bones,
His naked icy, burning bones:
When, looking up, he saw, ahead,
The far coke-ovens' glowing light
That burnt a red hole in the night.
And but to snooze beside that fire
Was all the heaven of his desire . . .
To tread no more this cursed track
Of cranching cinders, through a black
And blasted world of cinder-heaps,
Beside a sleek canal that creeps
Like crawling ice through every bone,
Beneath the cruel stars, alone

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

With this hell-raking wind that sets
The cold teeth rattling castanets . . .
Aye, heaven, indeed! that core of red
In night's black heart that seemed quite dead.

Though still far off, the crimson glow
Through his chilled veins began to flow,
And filled his shrivelled heart with heat:
And, as he dragged his senseless feet
That lagged as though to hold him back
In cold, eternal hell of black,
With heaven before him, blazing red,
The set eyes staring in his head
Were held by spell of fire quite blind
To that black world that fell behind,
A cindery wilderness of death,
As he drew slowly near and nearer,
And saw the ovens glowing clearer—
Low-domed and humming hives of heat—
And felt the blast of burning breath
That quivered from each white-hot brick:
Till, blinded by the blaze, and sick,
He dropped into a welcome seat
Of warm, white ashes, sinking low
To soak his body in the glow
That shot him through with prickling pain,
An eager agony of fire,
Delicious after the cold ache,
And scorched his tingling frosted skin.
Then, gradually, the anguish passed;
And blissfully he lay, at last,
Without an unfulfilled desire,
His grateful body drinking in
Warm, blessed, snug forgetfulness.

And yet, with staring eyes awake,
As though no drench of heat could slake

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

His thirst for fire, he watched a red
Hot eye that burned within a chink
Between the bricks: while overhead
The quivering stream of hot gold air
Surged up to quench the cold starlight.
His brain, too numbed and dull to think
Throughout the day, in that fierce glare
Awoke, at last, with startled stare
Of pitiless, insistent sight
That stript the stark, mean, bitter strife
Of his poor, broken, wasted life,
Crippled from birth, and struggling on,
The last, least shred of hope long gone,
To some unknown, black, bitter end.
But, even as he looked, his brain
Sank back to sightless sloth again:
Then all at once he seemed to choke,
And knew it was the stealthy strife
And deadly fume of burning coke
That filled his lungs, and seemed to soak
Through every pore, until the blood
Grew thick and heavy in his veins,
And he could scarcely draw a breath.
He lay, and murmured, drowsily,
With closing eyes: "If this be death,
It's snug and easy . . . let it come . . .
For life is cold and hard . . . the flood
Is rising with the heavy rains
That pour and pour . . . that damned old drum,
Why ever can't they let it be? . . .
Beat-beating, beating, beating, beat . . . "
Then, suddenly, he sat upright,
For, close behind him in the night,
He heard a breathing loud and deep,
And caught a whiff of burning leather.
He shook himself alive, and turned;
And on a heap of ashes white,
O'ercome by the full blast of heat,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where fiercest the dread blaze burned,
He saw a young girl stretched in sleep.

He sat awhile with heavy gaze
Fixed on her in a dull amaze,
Until he saw her scorched boots smoking:
Then whispering huskily: "She's dying,
While I look on and watch her choking!"
He roused and pulled himself together;
And rose, and went where she was lying:
And, bending o'er the senseless lass,
In his weak arms he lifted her;
And bore her out beyond the glare,
Beyond the stealthy, stifling gas,
Into the fresh and eager air:
And laid her gently on the ground
Beneath the cold and starry sky:
And did his best to bring her round;
Though still, for all that he could try,
She seemed with each deep, laboring breath
Just brought up on the brink of death.
He sought and found an icy pool,
Though he had but his cap to fill,
And bathed her hands and face, until
The troubled breath was quieter,
And her flushed forehead felt quite cool:
And then he saw an eyelid stir;
And, shivering, she sat up, at last,
And looked about her sullenly.
"I'm cold . . . I'm mortal cold," she said:
"What call had you to waken me?
I was so warm and happy, dead . . .
And still those staring stars!" Her head
Dropt in her hands: and thick and fast
The tears came with a heavy sobbing.
He stood quite helpless while she cried;
And watched her shaken bosom throbbing
With passionate, wild, weak distress,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Till it was spent. And then she dried
Her eyes upon her singed black dress;
Looked up, and saw him standing there,
Wondering, and more than half-afraid.
But now, the nipping, hungry air
Took hold of her, and struck fear dead.
She only felt the starving sting
That must, at any price, be stayed;
And cried out: "I am famishing!"
Then from his pocket he took bread
That he had been too weak and sick
To eat o'ernight: and eager-eyed,
She took it timidly; and said:
"I have not tasted food two days."
And as he waited by her side,
He watched her with a quiet gaze;
And saw her munch the broken crust
So gladly, seated in the dust
Of that black desert's bitter night,
Beneath the freezing stars, so white
And hunger-pinched; and at the sight
Keen pity touched him to the quick;
Although he never said a word
Till she had finished every crumb,
And then he led her to a seat
A little closer to the heat,
But well beyond the deadly stife.
And in the ashes, side by side,
They sat together, dazed and dumb,
With eyes upon the ovens' glare,
Each looking nakedly on life.

And then, at length, she sighed, and stirred;
Still staring deep and dreamy-eyed
Into the whitening, steady glow.
With jerky, broken words and slow,
And biting at her finger-ends,
She talked at last: and spoke out all

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Quite open-heartedly, as though
There were not any stranger there—
The fire and he, both bosom-friends.
She'd left her home three months ago—
She, country-born and country-bred,
Had got the notion in her head
That she'd like city-service best . . .
And so no country-place could please . . .
And she had worried without rest
Until, at last, she got her ends;
And, wiser than her folk and friends,
She left her home among the trees . . .
The trees grew thick for miles about
Her father's house . . . the forest spread
As far as ever you could see . . .
And it was green, in Summer, green . . .
Since she had left her home, she'd seen
No greenness could compare with it . . .
And everything was fresh and clean,
And not all smutched and smirched with smoke . . .
They burned no sooty coal and coke,
But only wood-logs, ash and oak . . .
And by the fire at night they'd sit . . .
Ah! wouldn't it be rare and good
To smell the sappy, sizzling wood,
Once more; and listen to the stream
That runs just by the garden-gate . . .
And often, in a Winter spate,
She'd wakened from a troubled dream,
And lain in bed, and heard it roar;
And quaked to hear it, as a child . . .
Just mad to sweep the house away!
It seemed so angry and so wild—
And now, it was three months or more
Since she had heard it, on the day . . .
The day she left . . . and Michael stood . . .
He was a woodman, too; and he
Worked with her father in the wood . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And wanted her, she knew . . . but she
Was proud, and thought herself too good
To marry any country-lad . . .
'Twas queer to think she'd once been proud—
And such a little while ago —
A beggar, wolfing crusts! . . . The pride
That made her quit her countryside
Soon left her stranded in the crowd . . .
And precious little pride she had
To keep her warm these freezing days
Since she had fled the city-ways
To walk back home . . . aye! home again:
For in the town, she'd tried, in vain,
For honest work to earn her bread . . .
At one place, they'd nigh slaved her dead,
And starved her, too; and when she left,
Had cheated her of half her wage:
But she'd no means to stop the theft . . .
And she'd had no more work to do . . .
Two months since, now . . . it seemed an age!
How she had lived, she scarcely knew . . .
And still, poor fool, too proud to write
To home for help until, at length,
She'd not a penny for a bite,
Or pride enough to clothe her back . . .
So, she was tramping home, too poor
To pay the train-fare . . . she'd the strength,
If she'd the food . . . but that hard track,
And that cold, cruel bitter night
Had taken all the heart from her . . .
If Michael knew, she felt quite sure . . .
For she would rather drop stone-dead
Than live as some . . . if she had cared
To feed upon the devil's bread,
She could have earned it easily . . .
She'd pride enough to starve instead,
Aye, starve, than fare as some girls fared . . .
But, that was all behind . . . and she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Was going home . . . and yet, maybe,
If they'd a home like hers, they, too,
Would be too proud . . . she only knew
The thought of home had kept her straight,
And saved her, ere it was too late.
She'd soon be home again . . . And now
She sat with hand upon her brow;
And did not speak again nor stir.

And as he heard her words, his gaze
Still set upon the steady glare,
His thoughts turned back to city-ways;
And he remembered common sights
That he had seen in city nights:
And, once again, in early June,
He wandered through the midnight street;
And heard those ever-pacing feet
Of young girls, children yet in years,
With gaudy ribbons in their hair,
And shameless, fevered eyes astare,
And slack lips set in brazen leers,
Who walked the pavements of despair,
Beneath the fair, full Summer moon . . .
Shadowed by worn-out wizened hags,
With claw-hands clutching filthy rags
About old bosoms shrunk and thin,
And mouths aleer without a tooth,
Who dogged them, cursing their sleek youth
That filched their custom and their bread . . .
Then, in a reek of hot gaslight,
He stood, where, through the Summer night,
Half-dozing in the stifling air,
The greasy landlord, fat with sin,
Sat, lolling in his easy chair,
Just half-way up the brothel stair,
To tax the earnings they brought in,
And hearken for the policeman's tread . . .
Then, shuddering back from that foul place,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And turning from the ovens' glare,
He looked into her dreaming face,
And saw green, sunlit woodlands there,
With waters flashing in between
Low-drooping boughs of Summer green.

And, as he looked, still in a dream
She murmured: Michael would, she knew . . .
Though she'd been foolish . . . he was true,
As true as steel and fond of her . . .
And then she sat with eyes agleam
In dreaming silence, till the stir
Of cold dawn shivered through the air:
When, twisting up her tumbled hair,
She rose; and said she must be gone.
Though she'd still far to go, the day
Would see her well upon her way . . .
And she had best be jogging on,
While she'd the strength . . . and so, Good-bye.

And as, beneath the paling sky,
He trudged again the cinder-track
That stretched before him, dead and black,
He muttered: " It's a chance the light
Has found me living still . . . and she . . .
She, too . . . and Michael . . . and through me!
God knows whom I may wake to-night."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I SING THE BATTLE

HARRY KEMP

I SING the song of the great clean guns that belch forth death at will.
"Ah, but the wailing mothers, the lifeless forms and still!"

I sing the song of the billowing flags, the bugles that cry before.
"Ah, but the skeletons flapping rags, the lips that speak no more!"

I sing the clash of bayonets, of sabres that flash and cleave.
"And wilt thou sing the maimed ones, too, that go with pinned-up sleeve?"

I sing acclaimèd generals that bring the victory home.
"Ah, but the broken bodies that drip like honey-comb!"

I sing of hosts triumphant, long ranks of marching men.
"And wilt thou sing the shadowy hosts that never march again?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONSERVATISM AND REFORM

MOWRY SABEN

EVERY man is both a Conservative and a Radical. There is no one who wishes to destroy everything that is; there is no one who desires to retain all things that are. The Conservative is simply a person who is, upon the whole, satisfied with present conditions; the Radical is simply a person who is very largely dissatisfied with them, and desirous of change. There are persons who reveal a large mixture of Radical and Conservative elements; Conservative in politics, it may be, and Radical in their religious views, or *vice versa;* there are others who are generally Radical, or generally Conservative, but who hold fast to some Radical idea, or to some Conservative one.

The average individual is not a logician; he is not logical in his usual ways of thinking. A majority of men could give no very lucid reason why they hold this article or that of the creeds which they profess. They have acquired their ideas from their parents, or their teachers, or the prevailing sentiment of their respective communities. The Marxians insist that one is governed by his material self-interests, but experience reveals that this is less true than might be supposed. There are times when self-interest is almost a negligible quantity. A person intoxicated with an idea will cast every shred of self-interest to the winds, and surrender himself, a willing martyr, to a cause which he is barely able to understand, or is even quite unable to comprehend. Persons are loyal to a church whose theological tenets have never penetrated their understandings, to kings whom they have never seen, and of whom they know nothing, to political leaders who are to them but little more than gilded names. There is much that is sublime, much that is humiliating, in this loyalty of men. But it reveals that feeling, rather than thought, turns the wheels of human life, although the feeling had its source in a thought of some human soul.

The human race has never progressed spontaneously, and as a unit; only the individual succeeds in raising himself above himself. The masses are like the ocean, which is at rest until the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wind plays over its surface, or the moon exerts her gravitating power. In spite of all that is credited to evolution, there is not, so far as one can see, any progress on the part of the race, save as the race comes under the influence of a master-mind, a genius, a hero, who lifts it to his own level by dint of some mystery, which will never find an explanation outside of metaphysics. The Johannine Christ says: "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me"; and all progress recorded by history has consisted in following a leader, who was lifted up by the power of an idea, that germinated, apparently spontaneously, in his mind. No doubt the seeds of progress lie within the hearts and minds of all individuals, but they will not germinate spontaneously in the majority; some human light and warmth must penetrate to them before that miracle will be witnessed. Democracy itself is a plant whose seeds matured first in aristocratic hearts.

Now the majority of human beings, be it remembered, are always fairly well satisfied with things as they are. Men may try to improve their personal condition a little here, or a little there, but most of them bear no ill-will toward the society into which they were born, no matter how despitefully this society may have used them. The African torn from his sunny home, and brought to America to serve in bondage, may have nourished for a time some slight spirit of rebellion, but his sons and daughters did not. On the contrary, these young blacks were very well contented with the conditions of servile toil which inured to the economic benefit of their masters and mistresses, and it is certain that the owners were no more firmly convinced that slavery was a divine institution than were the slaves themselves. The horror of slavery was born in the souls of men like Garrison and Phillips, not in the souls of those to whom slavery was the daily reality of realities. A few superior negroes, like Frederick Douglass, did feel the horror of it, but the impulse to freedom on their part was usually born out of abnormal conditions. The Frederick Douglasses of slavery were certainly few in number, comparatively speaking; for when freedom was already in sight, a majority of the slaves still clung with pathetic loyalty to their masters and mistresses.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Socialists, and many who are not Socialists, see in the average man of our time what they call a "wage-slave," and, in truth, a "wage-slave" is all that the average man can rightfully be called. For the average man does not own himself; he is owned by another, or by a corporation. Nevertheless, the wage-slave is no more conscious of the degradation of his condition than the African slave was. He is chained and fettered, but he does not feel the chains and fetters galling to his limbs. His master does not need, as a rule, to put a padlock upon his lips; he is as dumb as a sheep before the shearer. The average man takes it for granted that he was born into the world to be a hireling; to hew wood and draw water, to labor in shop, in factory and field, which others own, and to receive a scanty pittance in return for his toil from those who grow rich out of the profits. And as the horror of African slavery was born, not in the souls of the slaves themselves, but in the souls of free men and women, so the horror of wage-slavery was born, not in the souls of the wage-slaves, but in the souls of men who were born outside of the class of wage-slaves, or, at least, succeeded in rising out of it. The intellectuals are the great anti-wage-slave propagandists of to-day. Most of our ablest littérateurs are either Socialists, or Anarchists, outright, or they sympathize with those who are. These men, one might suppose, should be reasonably well satisfied with things as they are, but they are not satisfied. And if Capitalism ever receives its death-blow, the impetus will come from persons who have as good reason to be satisfied with present conditions as the bitterest enemies of Socialism have. What made William Morris a Socialist? or John Ruskin? or Robert Owen? or Oscar Wilde? or William Dean Howells? What made Elisée Reclus, the world's greatest geographer, an Anarchist? or Prince Kropotkin? or Henrik Ibsen? or Count Tolstoy? These men were successful enough. What produced in them their feeling of discontent, and sympathy for the workers?

To ask these questions is easy; to answer them is more difficult; nay, in the last analysis, impossible, if we seek an answer that shall satisfy the Rationalist. Any one could understand a rebellion of the slaves and the down-trodden; any one could

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

understand the attitude of mind which might lead to a revolt of the weary and the heavy-laden. But the smug-faced, prosperous Conservative is unable to understand, and he will never be able to understand, why persons who are prosperous, or fairly prosperous, should interfere with social conditions, and go forth proclaiming revolutionary messages. Well, there is no rational answer to be given why prosperous folk should do so, if, by rational, we mean what all can understand. What men call Reason explains very little that is beautiful, or sublimely true. Nobody knows why a genius will almost starve himself, and submit to all manner of direful deprivation, in order that he may write his poem, or compose his music, or paint his picture, or write his philosophical treatise. Plato believed that the poet was one who had been seized by a divine madness, and perhaps this notion of Plato's is as rational as any which can be conceived of in our present state of intellectual and spiritual development. For the truth is that we do not know what makes any man a poet, a revolutionary, or a lover. The love of man for man, for his country, or for the world, is the greatest of all mysteries. People debate whether Jesus worked miracles, and fail to see that he was himself, in his towering love for mankind, a miracle of miracles.

The genuine reformer is always a lover, and a great lover is necessarily a genius. I am forced to admit, however, that there are many so-called reformers who are not to be placed in the category of lovers, or of genius. They form the class of pseudo-reformers, which caused Lowell to write: "Every reformer is at heart a blackguard," and Thoreau to say: "I love reform, but I hate reformers." It has been said of Wendell Phillips that he had a vicious streak. However true or false this statement may have been, most of us have come into contact with the pseudo-reformer who uses the cause of reform in order to exploit himself. There are, indeed, some very little folk who pose as reformers. They have the heart of a stone, and the soul of an insect. They are not big enough to dwell in love, neither are they big enough to dwell in hate; to attract attention to their own little two by four souls is the whole of their ambition. They attack the landlord, or the capitalist, for ex-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ploiting the people, not because they really love the people, or really hate the people's enemies, but in order to shine in the limelight. Some live on a vegetarian diet, not because they like vegetables, or regard meat as dangerous to their health, nor even through any sympathy for the slaughtered animals, but for the simple reason that if they did not indulge in some eccentric act, nobody would pay any attention to them. They denounce the church, because it costs less to denounce it than to contribute to its support. Indeed, this type of reformer has little interest in any kind of reform if it costs him anything. He, too, like the capitalist, or the landlord, whom he belabors, is the slave of his purse. Does his brother, for whom he professes so much sympathy, starve, or walk, a homeless stranger, the city's streets? Well, this, in his opinion, is a crime of society to be railed against, but he never considers the question of his own personal duty in the matter. He loves reform; he believes in Socialism, or the Single Tax, or some other panacea for the social aches and ills to which we have fallen heir, but even an unfortunate Socialist, or Single Taxer, would fare ill if he went to him for relief. Sometimes this pseudo-reformer justifies himself on the ground—so satisfactory to his purse, and selfishness of heart—that the pain of the tortured is the seed of reform; or, it may be, he is full of Darwin and the dogma of the survival of the fittest, quite oblivious of his inconsistency. It has been said that none are so uncharitable as the Socialists. I know not whether this be true or not, but it is a common trait of all pseudo-reformers to reveal their uncharitableness, after they have thrown their small wits in the public's face, and proclaimed from the house-tops their undying devotion to mankind. They should be known for what they are, and placed in the pillory of human contempt.

The genuine reformer, however, as I have said, is always a lover. He does not lose sight of the individual in the forest of humanity. He loves the real man, and not the rhetorical image merely. He loves the individual, because he sees the potentialities that inhere in every individual. To be a true reformer, one must possess sight and insight. And the real secret of all the great reformers of the world I believe to have been their innate

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perception of some genuine worth, some real value, in the individual, which was buried by the monstrosities of society that they waged war against. The apostles of Democracy have seen that society does not secure the highest good so long as some individuals are forbidden to claim possession of their own souls. The Socialist sees that the division between classes and masses keeps the multitude from a realization of the self. The Anarchist perceives that coercion is the destruction of the mind. In the large essentials, Democrats, Socialists, and Anarchists have been apostles of light, although their vision has seldom been pure, for it is not given to many to see life steadily and see it whole.

All true reform means liberation; it means a new freedom somewhere. When we shall have secured the free mind and the free body, the task of the reformer will be over. The Conservative and the Radical will then be at one. Have we any reason to believe that so happy a consummation will ever be reached? No, that is unquestionably too much to expect, for the Ideal which lures humanity ever upward and onward is not finite, but infinite. Philosophers have discussed the goal of Evolution, but there is no goal of Evolution. There is no "One far-off, divine event, to which the whole creation moves." There are goals innumerable, goal beyond goal, and there shall be from everlasting to everlasting. A reform accomplished only reveals the necessity of a new reform. The clearest-sighted of Radicals never get to the bottom of the roots. And the Conservative is needed no less than the Radical, for he sees what the Radical often overlooks, namely, the noble things that have already been secured, and may not be discarded without peril.

I am frank to confess my radicalism. But I am a Conservative, too. And I perceive with regret that most of the radicalisms of the hour are spotted with much that is hideous and forbidding. Our Radicals, if left to themselves to work out our destinies, would prove no less dangerous to the interests of the race than the Conservatives, if left to themselves. The war for the liberation of the human mind and body needs to be waged, and waged vigorously, and I am a Radical because I believe in the absolute freedom of the human soul from coercive

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

restraint; but when I perceive that many of our Radicals forget to pay tribute to the value of art, of letters, of metaphysic and religion, or, at least, adequate tribute to them, it becomes evident to me that conservatism has much to say for itself. How much that is finest in human life the great Tolstoy himself would have destroyed! How barren his, and all other, asceticism is! "Who but the Poet was it," says Goethe, in *Wilhelm Meister*, "that first formed gods for us; that exalted us to them, and brought them down to us?" But many a Radical has learned to speak disrespectfully both of the poets and the gods. Utilitarianism is placed above beauty, and wealth is exalted above the ideals of religion. Our Socialists are usually materialists, and polite Radicals are prone to a cheerless agnosticism. But radicalism when it dispenses with the ideals of religion, and eschews the spirit of the great poets and prophets of the world, will discover ultimately that it has forsaken the stars, to admire a will-o'-the-wisp, wandering over treacherous bogs. Without the consolations and inspirations of religion, there can be no line of prophets, and, without prophets, there can be no enduring life. Let us banish the nightmares of religion, but let us conserve its divinest dreams. One cannot rally men forever to fight around the banner of a grievance. There is little magic in a cause that has no higher object in view than to enable persons to gratify without stint their stomach-hungers and sexual desires. Our materialist friends may think otherwise, and common weakness may seem to justify them; but there is a mystical element in man's nature which causes the masses to turn away very quickly from the philosopher who can promise them nothing but brute satisfactions. Man is not a brute, but a spirit, and Socialism, or Anarchism, or any other radicalism must acquire this truth before it can conquer the world. Many Socialists, indeed, endeavor to make of Socialism a religion, and this is well, if they do not forsake the truly inspiring dogmas that have come down from the past. They must incorporate all the vital elements of Christianity. The heart and head of humanity must be satisfied. One must feel the greatness of himself, and of his kind, before he will willingly become a martyr, and no cause has ever succeeded which did not possess a large number of followers

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who were willing to be sacrificed for the higher good. Will men willingly lay down their lives in order to give all men an opportunity to appease their stomach and sexual hungers, if there be no nobler battle-cry floating in the wind? Take away the inspiration which comes from the religious sentiment, and all radicalism will be but a sowing of the wind and the reaping of the whirlwind.

There will always be need of reform; hence there will always be need of Radicals. But our reformers must learn to be true Conservatives, no less than Radicals, for all true reform will be rooted and grounded in inspirations which have whispered to us out of the past. Cortes did wisely, no doubt, when he burned his ships upon reaching the coast of Mexico, but no thinker or artist will ever consent to burn his library or art-treasures, no matter what shore of destiny he may reach. He will heed the truth which Walter Pater proclaimed, in a striking passage of *Gaston de Latour,* a truth too often overlooked by reformers. "It happens most naturally, of course," said Pater, in speaking of Bruno, "that those who undergo the shock of spiritual or intellectual change sometimes fail to recognize their debt to the deserted cause:—How much of the heroism, or other high quality, of their rejection has really been the product of what they reject? Bruno, the escaped monk, is still a monk; and his philosophy, impious as it might seem to some, a religion." The true reformer will rejoice with Whittier that—

> All the good the past hath had
> Remains to make our own time glad.

The radical reformer may say, as George Fox, speaking two hundred and fifty years ago, did: "The Bible is not the Word of God; only the Divine Spirit speaking in every man is that Word"; yet he will be glad to acknowledge, if he does not overlook the truth which the wise Conservative would instil within him, that the word of God is found in the Bible, and in every other sincere book that has come from the mind of a man. All of the radical creeds of the hour are packed with truths. The Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists are speak-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing words of wisdom to which we can refuse to listen only to our hurt. But if these Radicals would win us, they must inspire us, and inspiration, I verily believe, will be found only in sentiments professed by Conservatives, but too seldom adhered to by them in the more strenuous hours of their daily lives. It is an old maxim, as old indeed as Democritus, that " from nothing, nothing comes "; and the inspirations of man were never manufactured in a vacuum.

Let men despise the idealism of the past as much as they please, the best that is in them, and in all of us, has its root in that ennobling culture of the spirit which began so many ages ago. The person who believes firmly that man is spirit, and that man is here to grow, to develop, to unfold, in truth, beauty and goodness, can never be a Conservative of the baser sort. His opposition to what professes to be reform, if opposed to it he be, will be based upon the belief that the change desired would work harm, rather than good; for he has only the highest welfare of his race at heart. Thus his opposition will never be based upon his material self-interests, so called; for these interests he has learned to despise, whenever they are found to conflict with the higher interests of the species; his prejudices he has cast aside, for he has come to see that the interests of the individual and the interests of the race are, in reality, identical. He may oppose Socialism, but his opposition will be based upon no such miserable grounds as those upon which we are now only too well accustomed to hear them based; he will not desire to see the masses kept in subjection to the Capitalist. He, too, will desire to witness the growth of the masses in power, and in all that ennobles the individual being. If he oppose Socialism, it will be because he fears that Socialism will destroy, rather than enhance, the individual; that the individual will wither, while a harsh, tyrannical Government grows more and more. But if we may accept Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity as ideals imposed upon us by our larger selves, for humanity to realize in the now and here, the present should be for us a period of golden dreams. If life means nothing, if the universe means nothing, then reform is only an illusory word, which has come to confuse us upon the highway of Despair; but if in our high-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

est ideals we may find the real meaning of our personal lives, because they are the quintessence of the spiritual universe, whose avatars we should be, then there is nothing too glorious for the heart of man to conceive.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONSTITUTIONAL CHAOS

CHARLES H. HAMILL

"To the end it may be a government of laws, and not of men." *

"A frequent recurrence to the fundamental principles of civil government is absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty." †

RECALL of Decisions means amending State Constitutions so as to provide that they may thereafter be amended by a majority popular vote, adopting, not general provisions affecting all alike, but regulations which may be special and temporary. Not only would it be for many reasons a dangerous governmental device, but it would have exactly the opposite effect to that claimed by its advocates, giving less rather than more immediate control to the people over their political destinies and making our institutions after a little time less instead of more adaptable to changing needs.

Students of government must needs have their thoughts frequently directed to the source of law and do not need to be told that in this country the source of power and the only rightful justification for the exercise of power are in the people, but no one believes that this now means or ever has meant that all governmental functions are to be discharged by temporary majorities. On the contrary it is known that when our forbears gathered in that great convention a century and a quarter ago they did not permit their ardent love of liberty to deceive their judgment; they brought to bear upon the great problems that confronted them the results of diligent and prolonged study of history. They knew that pure democracy, while it might furnish a valuable campaign cry for votes, could never be a bulwark of liberty. With infinite patience and sagacity they developed a system of government, safe, but republican, though it gave to tiny Rhode Island the same representation as gigantic New York in the Upper Legislative Chamber. They provided for an ap-

* Const. of Mass., Part I, Art. XXX.
† Const. of Ill., Art. II, § 20.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pointive judiciary to hold office during good behavior and with the power of ultimate nullification.

So, when the States gathered their chosen sons together and bade them formulate fundamental law to govern and protect their citizens, they did not think themselves betrayed because their representatives perpetuated a system of checks and balances in government.

Returning from the pursuit of beasts more ferocious but less dangerous than judges, Colonel Roosevelt began in 1910 a series of criticisms of the courts. It was not, however, till the Columbus speech, delivered just before the announcement of his candidacy, that he offered a remedy for the ills he deplored. Later, in the Carnegie Hall speech, he gave a more exact definition of his proposal. There, after disclaiming any intention with reference to the Supreme Court of the United States, or to ordinary civil or criminal proceedings or the recall of judges, he stated his position thus: "I am proposing merely that in a certain class of cases involving the police power, when a State court has set aside as unconstitutional a law passed by the legislature for the general welfare, the question of the validity of the law—which should depend, as Justice Holmes so well phrases it, upon the prevailing morality or preponderant opinion—be submitted for final determination to a vote of the people, taken after due time for consideration."

It does not appear that in any of his articles or speeches the Military Statesman has pointed out whether in his opinion the reform contemplated can be effectuated without constitutional amendment, but the implication of the Carnegie Hall speech is that it can be, for he there quotes from the remarks of Dean Lewis of the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania, thus:

"Constitutional amendments, designed to meet particular cases, run the danger of being so worded as to produce far-reaching results not anticipated or desired by the people. Colonel Roosevelt's suggestion avoids this difficulty and danger. If a persistent majority of the people of New York State want a workmen's compensation act, they should have it, but in order to obtain it, they should not be driven to pass an amendment to their State constitution which may have effects which they do

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not anticipate or desire. Let them pass on the act, as passed by the legislature, after a full knowledge that their highest court has unanimously expressed its opinion that the act is contrary to the constitution which the people at a prior election have declared to be their fundamental law."

This contemplates the reform without constitutional amendment. How is it to be done? Suppose the legislature should pass an act providing that hereafter when the Supreme Court shall have declared unconstitutional any act of the General Assembly purporting to be an exercise of the police power, the act shall be submitted at the next general election and, if ratified by the people, shall be the law, notwithstanding the opinion of the Supreme Court. If a case arose under an act so ratified, would the Supreme Court consider itself so bound? Would it not be obliged to say: "Under the constitution 'The judicial powers, except as in this article otherwise provided, shall be vested in one Supreme Court.' * The constitution does not provide that the decisions of the Supreme Court shall be subject to review. This court has held that act unconstitutional. The vote of the people alone does not change the constitution. The constitution itself provides how it may be amended"?

If, therefore, a constitutional amendment be required, there is still the difficulty of deciding what form such an amendment should take. Suppose by the means now provided each State constitution should be amended so that an article reading substantially as follows should be added:

"Whenever an act of the General Assembly purporting to be an exercise of the police power shall have been held by the Supreme Court obnoxious to any provision of the Bill of Rights of this constitution, there shall be submitted at the next general State election upon a separate ballot the question of sustaining such decision of the Supreme Court in form:

Shall the decision of the Supreme Court holding invalid an act entitled .....be sustained? Yes. [ ] No. [ ]

* Const. of Ill., Art. VI, § 1.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"If a majority of the votes cast at such election be in the negative such act shall be law notwithstanding said decision of the Supreme Court, and said court and all others shall be bound to enforce said act; but nothing in said act contained, or the popular vote thereon, shall for any other purpose be taken as an amendment to, or precedent for the construction of, this constitution."

This form of amendment is effective for the purpose and as little objectionable as possible. Any act "*purporting* to be an exercise of the police power," whether or not according to present accepted views it be a proper exercise of police power, is included. It would seem to be necessary to make such a provision because now, when an act is an exercise of the police power it must be sustained, notwithstanding it may incidentally infringe upon some of the constitutional rights of private individuals; and if the amendment should merely provide that only when an act which is indeed an exercise of police power should be held unconstitutional it might be reviewed, the present situation would not be changed. But if there were such a provision in the constitution, is it putting too low an estimate upon the integrity, or too high an estimate upon the ingenuity, of legislators to suggest that every act suspected by its framers of having constitutional defects would contain in its preliminary clause recitals of the dire difficulties it aimed to correct with multiplied references to the health, safety, morals, good order and general welfare of society?

But, it is asked, why should not a majority of the people, from whom the constitution is itself derived, have the power to amend or construe even to the extent of destroying rights preserved by the Bill of Rights, by such piece-meal amendments or construction, instead of by amendments in general terms?

The Federal Constitution has no Bill of Rights. Before the adoption of the last three amendments, while the States were forbidden to make anything other than gold and silver legal tender, to pass a bill of attainder, *ex post facto* law or law impairing the obligation of contracts, there were practically no other limitations on the power of a State in dealing with its own citizens. Even since the adoption of the last three amendments,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it may be doubted if there is anything in the Federal Constitution restraining a State from enacting laws limiting religious liberty, freedom of speech, right of trial by jury, or authorizing unreasonable searches and seizures, denying the writ of *habeas corpus,* compelling one to incriminate himself, authorizing transportation from the State for crime, imprisonment for debt, or an irrevocable grant of special privilege, or denying a certain and speedy remedy in the law, rights which with more or less particularity are protected by each State constitution. It will not answer, therefore, to say that the Fourteenth Amendment would protect against deprivation of rights now guaranteed by State constitutions. These great constitutional guaranties have become so commonplace that people have almost ceased to think of the necessity of maintaining them, but history is too full of the crimes committed in the name of religion, for instance,—offences to which unrestrained majorities are peculiarly prone,—to justify the making of any change in fundamental law which would put in jeopardy these safeguards.

It may be suggested, however, that the difficulties presented can be met by changing the proposed amendment so that instead of permitting a recall of a decision holding unconstitutional a purported exercise of the police power under any provision of the Bill of Rights, such recall shall be indulged only when the act is held unconstitutional on the ground that it deprives one of life, liberty or property without due process of the law under the State constitution, or when it is held unconstitutional under any provision of the Federal Constitution. If the proposed amendment should take this form, it may be argued that rights will be secure because the recall would apply only to cases in which there would exist a right of review on writ of error to the Supreme Court of the United States, and that that court may be safely relied upon to enforce the property and liberty rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. If this be the idea, why would not the same end be attained much more expeditiously and less expensively by eliminating from the State constitutions the clauses forbidding deprivation of life, liberty or property without due process? If the ultimate protection for these rights must be in the Federal tribunals, why create elaborate machinery

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

upon which the highest court of the State shall first be called upon to act, its judgment set aside upon a referendum, and a new litigation started which must wend its weary way to the Supreme Court of the United States? Are Americans prepared to say that it is wise political doctrine that the States shall not set up and guard their own respective constitutional liberties? Has the process of centralization, which has made such rapid strides in the last fifty years, gone to the point where we are prepared to modify our theory of a federation? Does it seem like the doctrine of a pure Democrat to remove from the determination of an elective State court the liberties of her citizens and rest them for final disposition with a tribunal in the selection of which they have only a remote and contingent influence? It may be that the American people have advanced to a stage of stability and civilization where such a device would be safe, but it is unnecessary, unwise and shocking to the sense of anyone who understands and believes in democratic government.

There was recently circulated in Chicago a copy of a letter by ex-Judge Grosscup in which he stated that his understanding of the proposal was that after an act had been held unconstitutional it should be re-submitted to the legislature and then if repassed should be submitted to the people,—an interval of two years to elapse. The act when approved by the people then becomes constitutionally excepted from the constitutional prohibition, the prohibition in all other respects standing as before. This, Judge Grosscup points out, would be amendment and not construction, the exercise of legislative and not of judicial functions by the people.

Does the proposal even in this form and confined to acts held unconstitutional as depriving of life, liberty or property, so that there would still be a right of review in the Supreme Court of the United States, offer an improvement over present methods? It is not doubted that the American people is capable of self-government. One hundred and twenty-five years of successful political institutions and advancing civilization attest it. But no widely scattered and highly varied people is capable of the details of self-government. Experience teaches that the American people, like other people, are better judges of men

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than of principles, and better judges of general principles than of modifications or refinements of principles. The surgeon must have my consent before he has the right to operate, but my consent does not confer the skill to operate. The consent of the people is essential to the right to judge, but their consent does not furnish the ability to judge.

All agree there is no more valuable right than that of religious liberty. If the people of any State in the Union to-day were called upon to vote "Yes" or "No" upon the adoption of a religious liberty plank to their constitution, if it had none, they could safely be counted upon to give an overwhelmingly affirmative vote. But suppose there should be submitted to the people the question of whether some one particular religious sect should have freedom of worship, would the vote be so overwhelmingly affirmative? The intelligence of our people and their interest in its general application may be relied on to support the proposition that no man shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law; but could their negative vote be so confidently counted upon if there were a proposal to take the property of one unpopular corporation and devote it to an unquestioned public good? Every man will vote "no" to the proposition that the constitution shall be so formulated that his property or liberty may possibly be taken without due process of law, but would that same man so surely vote to support a decision of the Supreme Court holding void an act requiring a Stock Yards Company without compensation to convert a section from the middle of its yards into a playground for the children of that congested neighborhood?

When general propositions affecting all men alike are submitted to our vote, we are impelled by a combination of patriotism and fairness, with self-interest, to declare in favor of that which makes for righteousness; but it would be a most dangerous expedient to remove from the control of men trained by tradition and experience to weigh the rights of others and submit to a general vote, perhaps in time of great popular excitement and prejudice, the rights of a small group of men whose interests might, for the time being, seem opposed to the welfare of the community at large. Those active in affairs have impressed upon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them daily that it is as necessary to know what the law is as that the law should be this or that. If this be true as applied to the ordinary commercial affairs of life, the daily dealings of men with men, how much more important is it that a citizen should know with certainty what are his fundamental rights as between himself and his Government.

The theory of a written constitution is that it embodies certain general fundamental and enduring principles essential to liberty and creates a machinery of government for their maintenance. With changing economic conditions come inevitably changes in current economic thought, which naturally tends to express itself in law. If shifting theories are to be embodied not in plastic statutory law, but in rigid constitutional law, not only will there be an abrupt departure from the theory of the written constitution, but we shall have entered upon a work of endless confusion. An elaborate employers' liability act, for instance, is made a part of the constitution; not only its general principles, but all its details, are endowed with constitutional vigor. After a few months' experiment one of its provisions proves unwise, or perhaps in conflict with another provision. The constitution must be amended! What was wanted was more flexibility; the result, more rigidity! It would not be many years before a State constitution would look like a crazy quilt, nor many more before parts of it would be no more useful or ornamental than the lithograph of a defeated candidate the day after election.

Colonel Roosevelt's method of campaigning for his theory is itself a strong argument against it. Ordinarily a bad reason does not hurt a good conclusion, but if it can be shown that the voters give heed to unsound and untrue reasons for making them judges, this is itself a persuasive reason for not permitting them to judge. This makes pertinent an inquiry into the arguments offered for the change.

No court is infallible. Popular criticism of judicial decisions is not only a sign, but a necessity, of healthful political life. It may be agreed that many State courts have made grave mistakes in law and in policy, in holding repugnant to the Fourteenth Amendment and similar provisions in the State constitutions,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many remedial acts. In construing an act with the constitution a court is confronted with a problem other than that which would be presented by a comparison of two contracts or even two statutes; there must be more than academic divergence or literal conflict before the act can be held void. "It (the court) can only disregard the act when those who have the right to make laws have not merely made a mistake, but have made a very clear one—so clear that it is not open to rational question." * But tested even by this broad standard do the criticised cases afford even a plausible pretext for a radical change in our institutions?

Noting in passing the anomaly presented by one who proclaims himself in favor of pure democracy but urges the recall of decisions of courts elected for comparatively short terms, while leaving inviolate the conclusions of a tribunal whose members are appointed for life, consider the decisions complained of.

In the so-called "Tenement House" case,† the act under consideration forbade the manufacture of cigars or the preparation of tobacco in any form in a tenement house situated in a city of more than 500,000 inhabitants, and defined a tenement house as a building in which more than three families had separate apartments where they did their cooking. In the case under consideration the defendant lived with his wife and two children in an apartment of seven rooms in a building in which there were three other apartments of equal size. Under the act it would have been an offence for a gentleman occupying an apartment on Riverside Drive to roll a cigarette or mix a bowl of pipe tobacco. One would think that criticism of the lack of skill in drafting the bill would be more pertinent than taxing the court which declared it unconstitutional with being out of touch with life and more in sympathy with property than humanity.

Of the "Bake-shop" decision,‡ so much decried, the only significant feature is that the statute was sustained by the State court whose decisions would be subject to recall and declared

* 7 Harv. L. Rev. 129. Origin and Scope of the American Doctrine of Constitutional Law. Prof. J. B. Thayer.

† *In re Jacobs*, 98 N. Y., 98.

‡ *People v. Lochner*, 177 N. Y., 145; 69 N. E., 373; *Lochner v. New York*, 198 U. S., 45.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

void by the Federal court which is to remain beyond the reach of review.

In the Carnegie Hall speech the Ives case,* in which the New York Employers' Liability Act was held unconstitutional, received especial condemnation. The speaker asserted that similar laws have been held constitutional by the Supreme Court of the nation and several courts in various States. This assertion will bear analysis. The New York act was not elective, that is, it did not give the employer an election whether or not to be governed thereby. It applied to certain occupations declared to be especially dangerous, and, roughly stated, provided that if a workman suffered injury caused by the necessary risk or danger of the employment or negligence, the employer should compensate the injured employee according to a fixed schedule. The act retained to the workman his common law rights of suit unless he availed himself of the act.

In general, law recognizes only two classes of rights as between individuals, those arising from contract (*ex contractu*) and those arising from a breach of duty imposed by law (*ex delicto*). This act imposed no new duty for the breach of which a remedy was given. The question presented to the court was whether it was competent for the legislature to compel A. to pay money to B. when A. was not under contractual obligation to B. to pay such money, and had violated no duty imposed by law. Conceding the broadest powers to the legislature and recognizing the extreme delicacy of the power of the court to review, the most ardent humanitarian on the bench must needs have some hesitancy in declaring that because of some supposed or real benefit to the community at large, one man or one class of men may be compelled to contribute directly to the support of another man or another class of men to whom no contractual or tortious relationship is sustained. The Court of Appeals of New York in a long and able opinion arrived at the conclusion that this may not be.

It is not true that *similar* laws have been before either the Federal Supreme Court or courts of several States. The Employers' Liability Law † passed on by the Supreme Court of the

* *Ives v. South Buffalo Ry. Co.*, 201 N. Y., 271; 94 N. E., 431.

† Second Employers' Liability Cases, 223 U. S., 1 (Feb. 15, 1912).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

United States did not purport to impose any such liability. It merely took away some of the common law defences, but still left the employer liable only in the case of negligence. The principal question passed on by the Federal court was whether the act was a proper exercise of the constitutional power to regulate interstate commerce. The constitutionality of an attempt to impose liability without breach of either contract or duty was not decided; it was not even presented for consideration.

Employers' Liability laws have been before the Supreme Courts of Washington,* Wisconsin † and Ohio,‡ and the Justices of Massachusetts § have rendered an opinion to the legislature on the proposed act of that State. Only the Washington act can, by any stretch of the imagination, be said to be similar in principle to the New York act, and it is sufficiently dissimilar so that the same court might easily sustain the one while refusing to countenance the other. Under the Washington act employers are compelled to contribute to a State Insurance Fund, the amount of their contributions being based upon their pay-rolls. The right of the employee against the employer is taken away, and in lieu thereof he is allowed compensation by the State out of the Insurance Fund.

The Ohio act compels nothing, but merely permits the employer to contribute to the State Insurance Fund, in which event he is exempt from suit. If he does not contribute the three defences of contributory negligence, fellow servant and assumption of risk are barred.

The Massachusetts, Wisconsin and Illinois acts are similar in principle, imposing no liability upon the employer other than that now recognized by law, but depriving him of the three defences unless he elects to come under the act.

The radical difference in principle between the New York act and all the other acts, with the possible exception of that of Washington, is obvious, as is also the lamentable inaccuracy of calling these acts similar for the purpose of justifying criticism of the New York court.

* *State ex rel. Clausen* (Wash.) 117 Pac. R., 1101.
† *Borgnis v. Falk Co.* (Wisc.) 133 N. W., 209.
‡ *State v. Creamer* (Ohio), 97 N. E., 602 (Feb. 6, 1912).
§ Opinion of Justices (Mass.), 96 N. E., 308 (June 24, 1911).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is there not now raised a doubt concerning the wisdom of the Recall of Decisions when we have so recent evidence of the influence over the voter of one who is so inexact in his thought or language? He maintains that a decision holding an Act of Congress a proper exercise of the powers conferred by the Commerce Clause is in conflict with a decision holding void an act of the legislature directing an employer to support an employee who has been injured without the employer's fault. If the people are to decide questions of fundamental law under the guidance of such arguments, may we not anticipate confusion if nothing worse in our principles of government?

The Carnegie Hall speech raises still a further doubt. The argument is this: Mr. Justice Holmes in his opinion in the Oklahoma bank case said (*arguendo*): "The police power extends to all the great public needs. It may be put forth in aid of what is sanctioned by usage, or held by the prevailing morality or strong and preponderant opinion to be greatly and immediately necessary to the public welfare." Therefore, whenever the people shall have approved an act after it is held unconstitutional, it is conclusive evidence that it is "held by the prevailing morality or strong and preponderant opinion to be greatly and immediately necessary to the public welfare." And therefore, the act is within the police power and constitutional, notwithstanding it may deprive men of liberty or of property, impair the obligations of contract, or infringe any of the other rights guaranteed under the Federal or State constitutions.

What intelligence in ruling on a question of constitutional law is to be expected from the electorate when so distinguished an advocate makes such use of a general expression out of its context? Lawyers know the terse, vigorous and epigrammatic style of Justice Holmes. His English is vigorous just because he leaves out qualifications that may be inferred. An epigram might be defined to be succinct truth when uttered, a diffused lie when quoted. But the distinguished gentleman is without even the excuse of the ordinary layman who mistakes dictum for decision, because Justice Holmes, when considering a petition for re-hearing in which counsel put upon this expression the same construction which is relied upon in the Carnegie

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hall speech, replied: "The analysis of the police power, whether correct or not, was intended to indicate an interpretation of what has taken place in the past, not to give a new or wider scope to the power. The propositions with regard to it, however, in any form are rather in the nature of preliminaries. For in this case there is no out and out unconditional taking at all." * Needless to say this has not been quoted.

The argument, based upon Justice Holmes' dictum, is that the people have the final determination of that which "is held by the prevailing morality or strong and preponderant opinion to be greatly and immediately necessary to the public welfare." And when the people have determined that a certain measure falls within that definition, it is an exercise of the police power and so beyond all constitutional inhibitions. The logical result is that all constitutional limitations are gone and the government of any State adopting that theory would indeed be a pure democracy, subject only to such control as may be afforded by the Federal Constitution. This method of argument, if employed by a lawyer, would meet a well-deserved rebuke from any self-respecting court. The doctrine of the Recall of Decisions is bad, but infinitely worse is the reasoning by which it is justified.

Those who doubt the expediency of the change are charged with the high crime of distrusting the people; but this retort proves too much, for Colonel Roosevelt himself is careful to limit his proposal to decisions of the State courts. Does he distrust the people when he declines to submit to their approval decisions of the Federal Supreme Court under the Fourteenth Amendment? Or are the people of the Union less to be trusted than those of any State?

It is true that changes more or less radical have come over social philosophy and that many of the economic and sociological views held forty or even twenty years ago are now disparaged by many of undoubted sincerity and learning. It may be that Spencer's *Social Statics* was not only not incorporated into the Federal Constitution by the Fourteenth Amendment, as said by Mr. Justice Holmes, but that the philosophy of that work was wholly unsound and political institutions, inspired by its teachings,

* 219 U. S., 580.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are founded in error. It may be that our courts have been too slow to recognize the needs of change, have held too closely to an outworn philosophy. This is thought even by some who do not believe the various experiments in legislation now being made present sound solutions of our difficulties, or even that they must necessarily improve conditions, but hold that, within very wide limits and subject to a minimum of restraint, civilization will most advance by most trying and failing, if need be, and that the fairest and most rational way to try is to permit the majority to direct the course of endeavor.

If no social development were possible without a change, possibly the dangers threatened might be braved. But courts respond, slowly, indeed, but none the less surely, to public opinion, which *non obstante veredicto* needs but little time to force its conclusion in one way or another. It was not long after the Supreme Court had said that Congress had power to establish a National Bank until there was no National Bank. As at present constituted, it is almost certain that the Supreme Court of the United States would not repeat the "Bake-shop" decision. If the State of New York desires to prevent the manufacture of cigars under unsanitary conditions, there is nothing in the decision of *In re Jacobs* to prevent it. If the people of New York wish an Employers' Liability Law which will accomplish all that would have been accomplished by the act held unconstitutional, four other States have shown how to get it.

In 1895 the Illinois Supreme Court held that the legislature could not restrict the labor day of women to eight hours.* In 1910 they held that they might restrict such hours to ten,† and quoted with approval from the Supreme Court of Washington a sentence which well expresses the flexibility of our present system and consequent lack of need of radical change:

"Law is or ought to be a progressive science. While the principles of justice are immutable, changing conditions of society and the evolution of employment make a change in the application of principles absolutely necessary to an intelligent administration of government."

* *Ritchie v. People,* 155 Ill., 98.
† *Ritchie v. Wayman,* 244 Ill., 509, 530.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The effort to intimidate thoughtful and prudent men by charging them with being enemies of the people cannot relieve the proposal from analysis. Neither should innovation be resisted by an appeal to the sacredness of our institutions. Our government is rational, and to the rationalist nothing is sacred in the sense that it is saved from scrutiny. Our present institutions are not necessarily right because they exist, but neither is the proposed change good because it is new. The burden is on the proponent. Tested by reason and by the experience of history, it fails to persuade.

To the man of Anglo-Saxon inheritance, with the traditions of the long fight for constitutional liberty in England in his blood, with the fundamentals of the common law forming the background of his daily thought, the cry for liberty or for an increase of liberty makes an urgent appeal, but when that appeal becomes so vibrant that it stimulates an emotion which blinds reason and forbids analysis, he would better clap his hands to his ears and retire to reflect. If, while he reflects, there comes to him the noise of him who calls upon the people, let him, if he be so fortunate as to have it at hand, take down his volume of Aristotle and read:

"There is yet another species (of democracy) which is similar to the last in all respects except that the people rather than the law is here supreme. This is the case when it is popular decrees which are the supreme or final authorities and not the law. . . . It is the demagogues who are responsible for the supremacy of the popular decrees rather than of the laws, as they always refer everything to the commons. And they do so because the consequence is an increase of their own power, if the commons control all affairs, and they themselves control the judgment of the commons, as it is their guidance that the commons always follow. Another circumstance which leads to the last form of democracy is that all who have any complaint against the officers of State argue that the judicial power ought to be vested in the commons; and as the commons gladly entertain the indictment, the result is that the authority of all the officers of State is seriously impaired. It would seem a just criticism to assert that this kind of democracy is not a constitu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional government at all, without supremacy of laws. For it is right that the law should be supreme universally and the officers of State only in particular cases, if the government is to be regarded as constitutional."

The proposal is vicious because, to the extent they are not shielded by the Federal Constitution, the rights of the minority would be subjected to the unrestrained will of the majority and, to the extent that the Federal Constitution does protect, the sense of self-government would be weakened by making the people rely upon the Supreme Court of the United States instead of their own State courts for the protection of their most fundamental and dearly prized rights; it is vicious because it would result in a patchwork constitution, no longer the succinct expression of enduring principles but the reflection of passing economic theories, creating greater difficulty rather than more ease in adaptation to changing conditions; and finally it is vicious because it opens the gate to our most carefully cultivated garden, that it may be trampled by the demagogue.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SOCIAL USE OF THE POST-GRADUATE MOTHER

ANNA GARLIN SPENCER

OF all the dark pages of human history, none is quite so black as that which records the treatment of "witches." A few of these victims of superstition were men, but the great majority were women; so that the very word witch has come to have a feminine suggestion. As Lecky truly says: "It is probable that no class of victims endured suffering so unalloyed and so intense" as that of those condemned to torture and to death as sorcerers and sorceresses. The martyrs for religious belief died rejoicing in the faith of a compensating and eternal heaven. The victims of popular ignorance, who suffered because freer in thought and more intelligent in action than their contemporaries, were sustained by the dignity of conscious rectitude and a superior perception of truth. The sufferers from political oppression, and from racial prejudice and the cruelty it has engendered, have generally possessed some relief in the loyalty of comrades and in the affections of family life. But witches were usually persuaded by the terrible ordeals to which they were subjected that they deserved their fate. The disordered condition of the public mind reacted upon their own consciousness to make them feel accursed of God and bound slaves to Satan, and horribly sure that they must go from the tortures of court and of church on earth to the everlasting torment of hell.

Why were middle-aged and old women, with a few young maidens, singled out as the special victims of that terrible mania of superstition which for fifteen hundred years lighted lurid flames of burning humanity on innumerable hilltops and inspired a malignity and ingenuity of torture unmatched in the whole realm of cruelty? There were two reasons. One, and the chief reason, was that hatred of women which asceticism developed. When Cato declared that "if the world were only free from women, men would not be without the converse of gods," he but expressed the general if rather good-natured contempt for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

women which the masculine classic civilization engendered. But when the early Fathers of the Christian Church denounced women as active centres of evil influence, they added hatred to contempt, and fear to indifference, and hence placed themselves in the realm of maniacal delusion respecting women. In Chrysostom's famous saying, "Women are a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination and a painted ill," he softened by oratorical phrase that horror of women felt by the ascetic monk. To that unclean and morbid creature, who inflicted torments upon himself in a nightmare of inverted morality, "woman was the door of hell" and the "source of human ills." To that ascetic monk who believed that to be most miserable was to be most holy, all the charm and joy of womanhood was a delusion and a snare. So far did this hatred of woman extend that in the sixth century at least one provincial Council of the Church forbade women to receive the Eucharist into their naked hands on account of their impurity! By reason of this strange perversion of religious doctrine the beneficent ideal of woman's spiritual freedom, as attested by the early Christian Church, was later on almost nullified. Woman escaped from the bondage of ethnic faiths, by which her heirship to spiritual responsibility and spiritual advantage was made to depend upon her family relationship, when Christianity made Jew and Gentile, patrician and plebeian, master and slave, man and woman, alike equal at the Altar of the Church. This Magna Carta of spiritual liberty which gave woman a soul of her own promised a new freedom and privilege all around the circle of human rights and powers. But when asceticism began to dominate the ideals of holiness, woman again passed under the yoke of bondage and became subject to a new and more terrible form of restraint. It was this feeling against womanhood in general, only softened by the attitude of the Christian Church toward the women who served its own interests outside the family life in Religious Houses, that made possible the torture and execution of so many helpless old women during the dark and middle ages. Feeble, often seriously diseased, generally past the time when they could demonstrate their usefulness to the common sense, these old women were peculiarly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

susceptible to the suggestion of hysteria and morbid fear which marked the witchcraft delusion. We read that over seven thousand victims were burned at Trèves; and that a single bishop of Germany, in a single year, ordered the execution of more than eight hundred poor creatures. In France in one execution four hundred witches suffered death; and in Italy a thousand were thus murdered judicially in one province. The Reformation did not end this form of persecution; in many cases it increased its violence. In Geneva five hundred victims perished during three months; and Luther declared he would "have no compassion upon these witches, he would burn them all." In Scotland, mystical and theology-mad, the persecutions were peculiarly atrocious; and it is common knowledge how the superstition crossed the seas and gave the shame of Protestantism to New England. Even the reformer Wesley believed both in witchcraft and in its severe punishment by the saints of the Church, declaring that "the giving up of witchcraft is in effect the giving up of the Bible." Not until the first quarter of the eighteenth century did the rational sense of mankind do away with this monstrous inhumanity. So great and wise a man as Sir Matthew Hale hung two witches in 1664, and the last execution in England occurred in 1712, thus linking bigotry to the age of reason.

The belief in magic, however, dates far back of Christianity and belongs to an almost universal tendency of the human mind to ascribe to supernatural causes both personal and social calamities. In this tendency to supernaturalism women have had their share not only as believers, but as active agents of supernal powers. Among undeveloped peoples, although there may be no women priests, there are women prophetesses, and sorceresses divide fearful honors with sorcerers. The proportion of witches to wizards is indeed far more equal in primitive life than is the balance between the sexes in the later period of witchcraft. As Otis Mason well says, in ancient times "women were thought to be more persuasive, acute and dangerous than men for lobby work between worlds." Hence, in the early days, witches were spoken fair and honorably entreated to use their powers for the benefit of mankind. Dr. Mason adds: "Women hear better, see better, are better talkers than men, and can therefore become

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

successful conjurers of fate." Inasmuch also as "they cook better," or more frequently, than men, their witch's cauldron may contain, beside "toil and trouble," some special concoction for the aid of faithful friends! The Zuni Indian sings:

> "The Sun is the father of all,
> The Earth is the mother of men,
> The Water is their grandfather,
> The Fire is their grandmother."

And the picturesque personalizing of nature by the child-mind of the race gave to women a place among the gods equal to that of men. Hestia, the sister of Zeus, was the special protector of the domestic hearth and worshipped with most sacred rites. The Roman Venus, the Greek Aphrodite, the Phœnician Astarte, the Assyrian Istar, the Egyptian Hathor, all celebrate the power of romantic love that binds the sexes together and slays antagonism between them. The Demeter and Athena myths all lead to a reverence for womanhood as embodied in the fruitfulness of the earth and in the peaceful order of social life. The great Egyptian goddess Neith, the Weaver, whose hieroglyph is the shuttle, passes down even to our own civilization the recognition of woman's value in the industrial arts. The Chinese female Buddha, Kwan-yin, the Mother-goddess, may be responsible even at this late day for some of the new freedom and power of her sex in that suddenly awakened land. Everywhere in mythology, and in the story of human life before formal history began, we find traces of a reverent appreciation of the woman-spirit as symbolized by goddesses. The classic Fates make women preside over destiny; the spinner of the thread of life, the mysterious power that determines its length, and the dread agent of its ending by death, are all portrayed as the genius of womanhood. The energy of women and their constant usefulness were fitly symbolized by the activity of the women-worshippers who in the Temple of Athena spent nine months of incessant labor in weaving the peplos which was carried in the sacred procession and was the annual gift to the goddess.

In all these hints of the past the woman-spirit is honored; and although "hags" and evil-working old women are not want-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing, the general tendency of primitive and of classic faith and worship was respectful if not reverent toward elderly women. The ancients believed in magic powers intensely and universally, but not that such magic powers always or usually denoted evil spirits. Christianity, when it entered upon its mania of asceticism, turned all the spirits of the air, even to the lovely fairies and the helpful "Brownies," into emissaries of Satan, the arch-king of evil. Minerva, the air goddess, symbol of light and wisdom, became transformed with all her kin into witch-creatures who spent unholy Sabbaths in secret converse with the Devil and came back riding their broomsticks through the air to seduce and ruin mankind. In this connection it must be remembered that the natural tendencies of the woman-nature are wholly against asceticism. The nearness of the mother to child-life forbids the average woman from really believing, whatever the theologians may make her say in church, that this world was meant to be a "living tomb" or a "chamber of death and misery." Children bring with them an ever-renewed and ever-renewing sense of the gladness of life, and not all the morbid priests or abnormal theologies have ever been able to persuade women in general that the laugh of a child is a lie! Nature, indeed, having in view the perpetual adjustment of adult life to the child's demand for freedom and for joy has, as Havelock Ellis finely says, "done her best to make women healthy and glad." The false view of life and duty which asceticism held and realized made this natural union of the woman-nature with the child's charm and gladness seem a wicked thing. Nothing but such a hatred of womanhood and such a fear of her as the embodiment of the natural attractions upon which the home is builded could have made possible the tragedy of the witchcraft delusions and its untold miseries.

The second reason why, as a rule, women were the special victims of this witchcraft horror is the fact that women, while suffering less than men from serious and fatal disorders of the brain and nervous system, are peculiarly susceptible to slighter disturbances which produce irritability, abnormal excitements and diseased manifestations of energy. This tendency is being corrected in rapidly increasing ratio by the better physical training

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of girls, by the wider intellectual interests of women, and, above all, by the new opportunities for congenial work in later life which are now the common privilege of the sex. In the earlier days, however, when witches paid the penalty of superstition through the tyranny of false doctrine, the lot of the majority of women was extremely hard. There was no limit to woman's child-bearing except nature's failure to add another to her cares; there was no limit to her household drudgery except nature's failure to give her strength to rise again to her daily task. She was socially denied, except in the case of a few "ladies" at the top of life's opportunity, any share in the intellectual stimulus that is so therapeutic, and she had no ability to secure those pleasant diversions that balance work for the benefit of the nervous energy. After thirty to fifty years of overwork, under most adverse conditions for the preservation of health and strength, the wife and mother could be left to an idleness most harmful; or else be pressed still to a form of hard labor least satisfying to personal desires. It is not strange that the prevalence of nerve troubles of various sorts among old women thus mistreated has made them pass down in art and history as "uncanny," and also made them, during the nightmare of the witchcraft delusion, seem the natural prey of Satan as he sought "whom he might devour." Men and women alike age prematurely under the hard conditions of primitive life; but old women have been thought to be either wholly useless or else made to work in narrow lines of activity, while old men have been more often favored as still "good for counsel." This hard lot of the old woman was modified in the patriarchal family by making the oldest mother a sort of sub-despot, a deputy ruler over all the younger women and girls. This has helped her in dignity of position, and in stimulus to effort, to conserve her powers in old age; but, lacking education and true moral discipline, the mother-rulers of more primitive forms of family life have often perpetuated the most archaic and socially harmful usages of domestic order. This personal alleviation has therefore not been a social gain.

Of all the wastes of human ignorance perhaps the most extravagant and costly to human growth has been the waste of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the distinctive powers of womanhood after the child-bearing age. The absurd mistake of supposing that a woman's usefulness was ended when her last baby grew out of need for her personal ministrations was natural so long as women were held subject and inferior, and denied all mental training; but its lingering remnants in the modern mind are grotesque. Only recently a political orator, wishing to characterize his opponents in the most contemptuous of terms, said "they were a set of old women." This phrase as an expression of utter futility and weakness has come down from times in which women's strength of mind and body was so shockingly exploited that in old age they were very often diseased and abnormal, helpless, and a family burden. From this fact, due not to natural limitations, but to social conditions resulting from the misuse of womanhood from childhood to old age, has arisen the false conception of women as semi-invalids in the earlier part of life and incapable of any efficient labor of mind or body in the later years. Nothing could be further from the truth as now revealed and demonstrated by scientific study. In point of fact we now know that so far from men being the favorites of nature as to health, strength and longevity, and women (like step children) a denied class, the contrary is more nearly true. It is women, as mothers and potential mothers of the race, whose life and health the cosmic forces most concern themselves with, and longest sustain in activity. Inquiries into facts are now taking the place of theories, whether of poets or theologians, and facts prove women capable of more than holding their own in the balance of sex-relationship and in the work of the world. Facts show that more male than female children are still-born, and that more male infants succumb to disease before the third year. Facts show that more boys than girls are abnormal or deficient in mind or special sense, and that more boys than girls suffer premature death from many of the ills that flesh is heir to. Facts show, above all, that more women than men live to a ripe old age, and not only thus survive, but have a good chance for health and strength. It is declared by experts that mental derangements are more common in old men than in old women, Dr. Wille setting the ratio at ten per cent. males to six per cent.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

females. The specific gravity of the blood, as Lloyd Jones has shown, is found higher in old women than in old men; and there is far greater constitutional youthfulness among old women than among old men, which is in itself a sign of greater vitality and later conservation of work-power. The liability to death is about the same in the two sexes between the third and thirtieth years, and there is a special danger-period for girls between the fourteenth and twentieth years; but when we get above thirty-five the chances are better for both life and health for women than for men. This is not alone a peculiarity of civilization, for we are told by those who have especially studied the matter that among some savage tribes fully two-thirds of those surviving the sixtieth year are women. It is true, however, that the conditions of civilized life, especially those easier domestic conditions we now have as the result of inventions of all sorts, are especially favorable to longevity in women. Dr. Langstaff says: "It is quite plain that the recent fall in the death rate favors the accumulation of surplus women." The result of all the recent studies of sex-differences and sex-conditions leads to the conclusion that under most of the conditions of social life, in a wide range of varied forms of human society, we have proof of the "greater physical frailty of men and the greater tenacity of life in women." As Dr. Campbell says: "Women possess a greater innate recuperative power than men," and although more often slightly ill, make easier recovery. These facts make the phrase "the weaker sex" as applied to women a little misleading.

Men, it is true, are able to summon for emergency, or crisis-effort, far more muscular power than women. They have a steadier nerve, and a greater capacity for putting all the strength and vigor they possess into a short term of effort for a distinct end. This gives them efficiency of the highest sort in the regulated industries of the world. This makes men far better able than women to keep pace with the modern machines, to hold their even share of the burden of business demands, and to fill the larger and more exacting offices of the world in public affairs. Moreover, men have, through all their earlier years, "a straight line" of progressive power up to the period of the slowing down

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of age; while women have for years "a curved and variable line" that requires consideration each month at its weakest point. Men can go from strength to strength steadily until they have reached their meridian of power without a break. Women have periodicities that often hinder regular advance. Men also are relieved from the physical cost of parenthood. A man who is married and has children has, indeed, "given hostages to fortune" and must work the harder and serve the more unselfishly. But women, in addition to the economic burdens which parenthood imposes, must also contribute a measure of physical force, a determination of bodily strength both in child-bearing and child-rearing, which means often a heavy price paid for social serviceableness. A childless woman once said to a mother whose splendid family of five children were all that any parent could desire, "How I envy you! I would give twenty years of my life to have such a family as that." "Well," answered the mother, "they cost about that." All that is implied in the curves and periodicities of women's lives makes them more dependent upon men during the early period of life, than men are upon women, and gives a sound biological reason for the social demand for "chivalry," and for the saving in all possible ways of women's strength and health while they are about the social business of motherhood. This it is which makes the father in duty bound to carry the heavier economic load all through the child-bearing and child-rearing period. This it is which made our Saxon forefathers in an ancient statute give "a married woman, with child, free range of the forest for wood-gathering," and a generous "share of the harvest." This it is which has made all progressive and successful civilizations guard both the young mother and the potential mother from excessive labor: guard such both by the personal devotion of their men relatives and by the social consideration of laws and customs.

When, however, the climacteric of middle life is reached, nature gives a new deal and starts a fresh balance of power between men and women. When the child-bearing age is passed woman's line of life becomes as "straight" as man's, and the "curves" that have required consideration at their weakest point are no longer a part of her experience. Moreover, at the point

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when the change comes in women's physical condition, there may be, and now increasingly is, a fresh start given to the mental and emotional life. It cannot be too soon realized that in the lives of women there is capacity for a *second youth.* A second youth, that holds in reserve full compensation for any expenditure that a reasonable motherhood may have demanded. A second youth, when new thoughts blossom, when wishes and tendencies of personal development may flower into realization, when all that has gone into the sacrificial service to family life may add a peculiar flavor and a special wisdom to personal achievement or to enlarged social service. This is the meaning of the "Women's Club Movement" and of the many forms of associated action by which mature womanhood, now that it is at last educated and free, takes up its own self-culture and its own chosen activities for the common good. Asked once to describe the Women's Club Movement one answered, "Women's Clubs are the great non-academic university-extension movement of the nineteenth century for women in their second youth." A wit hearing the answer asked if a "second childhood for women preceded their second youth?" Not a bad hit, and not simply a jest; for, if an undisciplined woman, bound to make a fool of herself, does not accomplish that unhappy distinction before she is twenty-five, she will surely do it between forty-five and sixty to astonish her friends by her extravagancies of behavior. The trained and disciplined woman, however, is eager for work and for large enterprises at this period of life as never before. She seeks activity of whatever sort is native to her own desire, and if she is not sufficiently well educated or sufficiently in touch with the things best worth doing, in the lines most congenial to her natural capacity, she is likely to rush about from one to another busyness of interest, without plan or effectiveness and to a distraction of energy. To many women, also, whom life has used hardly in circumstance or relationship, there may come a childish restlessness before they can "settle down" to the true rejuvenescence of thought, of feeling and of power which is theirs by right. The old theories of women took no account of this rich and large possibility of later life. If the fact that more women than men lived to old age, and that more women than men seemed

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to relish life and want to engage in activities of moment after they were old, was at all perceived, it was laid to the natural perversity of women that they thus hung on to life when no longer desired and put themselves in the way when they could no longer do that for which they were made! As Professor Sheavyn well says: "The disadvantages of being a woman have been better understood than the advantages." Now, for the first time, we are learning how great are those advantages; or may be if the woman's life is lived sanely and wisely; advantages physical, psychical, and vocational, personal and social.

Nature has indeed conveyed to us in no uncertain manner her determination that her gifts shall be shared with an absolute justice between her men-children and her women-children. The boy has his long, straight path of progress, passing on into youth, and later manhood, up to the point where senile decay threatens; which point clean living, noble purpose, intellectual activity and wise physical, mental and moral hygiene of every sort may push far into the seventies or eighties, or even beyond, if the prophets of a longer term of life for mankind may be believed. This long straight pathway gives man his preëminence as a special worker and vocational expert. The girl, on the other hand, has her better start in constitutional vigor and her surer normality and balance of faculties; and the woman, throughout early and later experience, possesses her stronger recuperative power, her greater capacity for constant labor if free from excessive strain and varied in sort; and her curving line of muscular and nervous power, while giving more variability and less dependable response to highly organized labor, insures her a finer and more flexible adjustment to the general demands of the social order. If she marries and has children she has her longer "curve" of recurrent need for special consideration, protection and care. At last she emerges from the variability which is the price of her special sex-contribution to the social fabric, and becomes in a peculiar and a new sense a citizen of the world; a *Person,* whose own relationship to the social whole may now of right become her main concern. The audiences composed of professional workers and members of reformatory organizations and leaders in philanthropy are often a striking testimony to the as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

yet half-conscious response of women to this call of their second youth. The faces of women of sixty years and over, lined with marks of many emotions and much lore of life-experience, are alight with an enthusiasm and a hope, a strong and vital interest in life and its meaning, which loses nothing in attractiveness when matched against the groups of college girls as they leave their Alma Mater. Indeed the mothers are often younger at the moment than their daughters just graduating, because love has taught them as well as books, and contact with child-nature has kept them hopeful as well as made them wise, while the student, still in the period of acquisition, is always in danger of mistaking words for life, theories for realities. Moreover, women who have had a true marriage and a welcome discipline of family service have had what no young women, and few if any unmarried women possess, the constant help of the masculine way of looking at things to balance and keep sane their distinctively feminine approach to life. They are therefore able, if they have used well their opportunities, to understand men and women alike and to work for and with both impartially. This is a point of far more social importance than is at present recognized. If there are any dangers of "feminization" threatening us in the school or in society at large, any real overplus of specially "womanly influence" in our present civilization, those dangers inhere in the large celibate majority of intellectual leaders and representatives of womanhood in the field of expert knowledge and work. There is a "finicky," over-precise, ultra-refined morality and idealism which women develop by themselves, and which is difficult to adjust to the larger, looser, simpler, but often more vital ethics and aspiration of men. The rounded wisdom and experience of the post-graduate mother (who usually has to practise her motherhood on her husband as well as her sons and thus learns tolerance and breadth of view) will come to be prized at its full social value, therefore, when more women qualify for its highest potency and the world learns at last what "old women" are for, and what social end they may serve. Then it will be at last understood why nature preserves so carefully both the life and the health of women; why she gives them a new strength of body, a new youthfulness of purpose, a new capacity

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for spiritual adventure, so far in excess of men, when the time comes that their whole life may rightfully become their own in a more complete sense than ever before.

It is said of the high-caste Brahmin that he has three stages in life, three grand divisions of duty and of experience. First he must be a learner, devoted to acquiring the knowledge that a leader of men should possess; next he must be a father and householder, paying loyally his debt to society by rearing offspring who may connect his ancestors with his descendants in worship and family continuity; last he may become a pilgrim, a solitary seeker for truth, enjoying at will the high communion of those who live but for spiritual ends of being. The modern woman has now outlined before her, faintly as yet but growing in clearness, her own "three-fold path of life." First, the learner and the doer fitting for self-support and self-direction; next, the devoted servant of life's most intimate demands upon human beings of the mother sex; last, a conscious sharer, in a new and more inspiring sense, in the larger life of the race.

There can be no general clearness of vision as to this three-fold path of womanhood, however, until more educated and competent women prepare for their last and splendid opportunity of service by a better use of the leisure hours of that period of life which is given especially to family interests. The vulgar phrase, "She does not need accomplishments now, her market is made," only emphasizes the too frequent undercurrent of women's attitude toward personal achievement. If one must earn a living outside the home, ambition now makes most women seek to do it in the best way they can and to the highest results of financial and social return. But the average married woman, with or without children, is too prone to look upon her life as ceasing to afford or to need new or continued modes of self-expression. There is an almost fatal tendency among young married women of average education and circumstances to give up wholly the vocational interest which was theirs before marriage. "No, I don't play now, I gave up practising after John was born." "No, I don't paint now, the house takes so much time and Mary is a great care." "I never think of reading a book now, the magazines are all I can manage with the house, and no maid."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

" I can't work at my trade or my clerical work now, of course, for I can't be gone from the house all day." How often these and similar expressions are heard! It is true, of course, that competitive industry being arranged for all-day service most married women are unable to engage profitably or properly in the work they did before marriage. But there are few women who cannot keep at least a selective and constant interest, and some small practice to " keep the hand in," that will stand them in stead if there should be need of earning in case of widowhood or financial calamity, or when larger leisure from the upgrowing of the children makes it well for them to have some special interest of their own. Moreover the period of life when a woman has the largest end of her activity fastened to the family need, and her economic position, therefore, properly secured by her husband's work for the family, is precisely the period when she may use her leisure, be it much or little, in preparation for some kind of work she wants to do but was not trained for as a girl. How many men find themselves in positions where they are kept doing what they would so gladly exchange for another sort of labor no one was wise enough to fit them for in youth! The tragedies of misfit industry, the heroisms of men who stick at a hated task because it is all they know how to do and they dare not leave it for the sake of wife and bairns,—these are material for great dramas. How rich an opportunity many women waste, an opportunity to prepare in a leisurely way, through years of security of home protection and care, by use of the bits of leisure almost every day affords, for the work nature intended they should do. Women have but just begun to see and use the advantages of their three-fold path of life and only those most clear-sighted and brave can as yet do so.

One thing stands in the way of women's realization and appropriation of these advantages, and that is the aristocratic attitude of both men and women toward " paid work " for women. So long as it is thought unfitting for a married woman to earn money inside or outside the home, so long as it popularly discredits a man if his wife thus earns as a result of her own labor outside domestic work, we shall have a majority of women unwilling and unable to use to best advantage the leisure hours of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their earlier married life and hence unable to use most effectively their third stage of opportunity. Enough has been said in this series to show that they are intended to strengthen rather than to weaken the demands of family life and child-care upon women. It remains to insist that until women themselves outgrow, and teach their "men-folks" to outgrow, the notion that it is honorable for men to earn money in useful labor but dishonorable or a dire misfortune for women to do so, the right personal and social use of women's lives cannot be accomplished. It is now considered right and highly proper for a woman to earn money if unmarried and her "father can't take care of her," or if a widow whose "husband did not leave enough to support her," or a wife whose husband is disabled, ill or incompetent. It must become natural and common in the public eye for any woman to earn money who wants to and can. At present we have advanced little beyond the period when the "wife of Thomas Hawkins" was granted by the selectmen of her town, in the seventeenth century, the "right to sell liquors by retayle, considering the necessitie and weak condition of her husband"; and when widows were "approved" by the church trustees to earn a pittance in "sweeping and dusting the meeting house" because they had no "provider." The great city of New York still requires its married women teachers to swear that their husbands are morally, mentally or physically incompetent in order to retain their positions!

The adjustment in plans of living to home needs and obligations is a private concern of each married pair. The only social claim is that the children, if there are any, shall be well-cared-for in all respects, physical, mental, moral and vocational. The adjustment of each woman to her own vocational desires, capacities and opportunities is a matter for herself and her husband to settle between them; it is not even the proper concern of either mother-in-law! The more exceptional women earn in art and literature, in singing, painting, acting, on a plane where it is clear they are conferring social benefits and hence have a right to financial returns which do not degrade but give distinction, the more nearly we approach a time when common women may earn money by any sort of labor they can do well enough to be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

paid, and whether married or single, without injuring their own or their husbands' social position. We are, however, a long way from that day now, when even the law penalizes the marriage of teachers and custom forbids any organized adjustment of labor to the special needs of the housemother. The choice for the manual worker is sharply made, "labor all day and leave your baby at the day-nursery or stop at home and starve." The choice is almost equally difficult for the clerk, the stenographer, the telephone operator, the professional woman, the business manager. The Utopias in which all these difficulties vanish with a "presto change" are interesting to read of in books; but what is really helping the actual situation is that men and women, richer or poorer, but of the moral and intellectual élite, are now working out for themselves many modifications of the rigidity of modern industry as it relates to the married woman and the mother, in a most difficult but a most useful domestic experimentation.

Meanwhile the average young married woman, and especially the average young married woman of good education and fairly good financial circumstances, needs most of all to see and to use her fine chance for preparation for vocational achievement, or for social usefulness, after she has become released from the heaviest duties to her family. Everything done by such a young woman in a professional manner and for pay on a business basis, helps to democratize the industry of women and to place the whole relationship of her sex to industry on a truly social plane. The aristocratic notion that it is a dire calamity for a married woman to have to earn money can only be outgrown by having multitudes of married women who do not have to earn money for personal comforts or family well-being do something that the world wants to pay for and take their compensation naturally as men take it for worthy service. Whether or not, however, women earn money in personal labor outside the home during the years when their chief devotion must be to the family needs, they can keep interest and study and acquaintance open toward the free time of their second youth, when they will need and want to do something for and by themselves to round out their own personal lives: whether that something

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shall be a paid or an unpaid service. All this presupposes that women shall have had needed care and protection and support in their distinctive function of motherhood and thus have escaped that too common tragedy of overwork and neglect which now leaves so many women helpless and invalid in middle life. The majority of housemothers among the wage-earning class are now overworked and underfed; overburdened with care and denied all the diversions and rest that enable women to keep well and happy and able to enter upon their third stage of life fitted for its opportunities and its joys.

It must be pressed home to the public mind and conscience that the waste of womanhood in its later life has been throughout the ages, and now is, the result of a still more ignorant and careless treatment of girlhood. The same scientific inquiry which proves the eligibility of womanhood to a ripe and useful, a vital and youthful-hearted old age, demonstrates beyond cavil the social crime of ignoring the special danger-point in the physical life of woman. We learn from every quarter of science that the weak point in womanhood is between the ages of thirteen or fourteen, and nineteen or twenty years. At that time and that alone death and disease stand nearer and more threatening to the girl than to the boy. At that time and at no other, save during actual child-bearing, the womanhood of the race stands in greater need of special protection and help from society and from parenthood than does the potential manhood of the race. Mature women may always need social protection against long-continued, monotonous and uninterrupted labor. They may always be less able than men to survive shocks of accident or to sustain hardest trials of muscular effort without permanent harm. As Professor Thompson says: "Men are stronger in relation to spasmodic efforts and isolated feats." Hence the rule of the sea in shipwreck, or of the land in any terrible disaster, the rule of "women first to be saved" has a reason in the nature of things, since men can summon so much more special power for the special demand. The greater tenacity of life among women, however, their greater resistance to disease, their larger capacity for continual, sustained effort if that is varied in form and not too severe, are ample proofs that women need not be invalids

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or "weak," and that it is a social mistake or a social crime, or both, if they are so in any prevailing numbers at any period of life. The reason that the old age of women is so often pathological in condition, the reason that marriage and maternity mean so often extreme suffering and disease, the reason that so many women fail of the second youth that is their birthright and have instead a long decay of life in depressing helplessness and futile longing, is more than all else because the first youth of women is so generally misused. Those years between fourteen and twenty when death and disease stand nearest to womanhood are the very years when in many civilizations marriage and child-bearing have made their heaviest demands upon the young life. The physical weakness of both men and women in India, their lack of stamina, their easy yielding to all manner of diseases, their quick fading at the touch of hardship, this is the price India has paid for her child marriages. And not this alone, although this is so obvious that all mark its terrible consequences of social mistake. There is another price paid, the very life-portion of nature's dower to the women of India, nature's dower of health and happiness. Nowhere do women so age in mid-life, so suffer with all manner of maladjustments of physical, mental and moral condition, as in countries where girlhood is thus sacrificed, and the time of all others when womanhood most needs care for the upbuilding of the individual life is misused for a premature devotion to other lives. The sadness of the women of India, who have become conscious of their lot and its contrast with happier lives, is only understood when we see clearly what an outrage upon nature's laws is this marriage of unformed girlhood. We trace in every civilization that has thus ignored the danger-point in womanhood's physical development the same weakness in the race, the same unutterable sadness of premature old age and of widespread disease among the women.

We are not to take credit to ourselves, however, as a civilization humane and wise in this matter. We are doing almost as wicked and wasteful a thing as respects the girlhood of the poorer classes in these United States in the morning of the twentieth century. Read again what we do to our young girls between the ages of fourteen and twenty, when of all the periods

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of life for women there is most danger of premature death and of wasting and disabling disease. Concerning the two hundred and ninety-five separate employments in which women earn wages and salary, as recorded in the census of 1900, two facts stand out prominently,—namely, the youth of the women and girls, and the low quality and poor pay of the work of the majority among them. Other facts are coming clearly into light, baleful in their significance, as we more closely study conditions. In the canning factories 2,400 rapid and regular motions a day in tin-cutting for the girls employed; girls sixteen to twenty years of age, and speeded to the limit of supreme exhaustion in this race to keep ahead of the other workers. In the confectionery business, 3,000 chocolates "dipped" every day at fever heat of energy. In the cracker-making trade, the girls standing or walking not six feet from the ovens show a white faintness from heat and hurry as they handle a hundred dozen a day; and "can't stand the work long," as even the strongest confess. In the cigar-making industry 1,400 "stogies" a day worked over by girls seventeen to twenty years of age; and not only that but children, boys and girls from five to twelve years old, stripping tobacco as helpers and the whole work so exhausting that even the older girls say they "can't keep the pace more than six years." In the garment trades the sewing machines speeded to almost incredible limits, the unshaded electric bulbs and the swift motion of the needle giving early "eye-blur" and a nerve-strain that enables the strongest to earn only five to six dollars a week, while the goal of eight dollars won by a ruinous "spurt" only crowds down the average wage by cutting "piecework" prices. And in this trade "custom-work" brings the unsanitary tenement sweat-shop into union with the best factories, to work the children younger and under worse conditions and leave no rest-time for youth even in the home. In the laundries women are operating machines so heavy that their whole bodies tremble with the strain of their work; and the muscular system, drawn upon for this "spasmodic effort for an isolated feat," repeated as rapidly as the body can be forced to act, under the spur of a never-ceasing pressure, is often that of young girls, many of them under sixteen years of age. In the metal trades 10,000 "cores" a day

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turned out after two or three years' apprenticeship, and still the young girl under twenty most in evidence in the bewilderingly rapid process. In the manufacture of "caskets" and other articles where strong lacquer is used, the manufacturer often says he "can't stand it more than two or three minutes in the room" where the fumes of the preparation are worst, but his girls work in it ten hours a day for the pitiful wage of nine dollars a week, called "good pay for women." In the soap-making business the girls must wrap 1,100 cakes of soap a day in the bad air and worse smells of most such places in order to get a decent wage. The "telephone girl" gets many a harsh criticism; it might be better if she got a little more attention as a social factor. Her age is seldom over twenty; seventeen to eighteen years is the average. Physicians tell us that it is ruinous to the nervous system to do this exacting work more than five hours a day even with an hour's rest, complete and in the best possible conditions, between each two and one-half hours of service. But our telephone girls work their five hours in continuous service and if after four or five years of such labor they "break down," what then? In mercantile houses the all-day standing which is the rule injures girls so seriously that physicians continually complain about it. The law that requires seats in department stores is so much a dead letter that the girls laugh bitterly at any question concerning its enforcement. In places where five or six hundred girls are employed nineteen to thirty seats may be provided; but to use even these may cost the girl her position. The hours, from eight to five or from eight to six o'clock, and the low wage which forbids proper clothing and nourishment if wholly depended upon for self-support, add to the peril of the shop-girl's condition. The "moral jeopardy of her position," as Miss Butler calls it,—is also a factor of sinister suggestion, when we remember that with all their hard and continuous labor, three-fifths of the shop-girls earn less than seven dollars a week. The much vaunted "chivalry of men," the proudly assumed "reverence for womanhood" paraded in public addresses on the glory and moral excellence of our present civilization, do not work far down in the social scale. The fact is that because women are the cheapest of laborers and because young women

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

must all work for pay between their school life and their marriage in the case of the poverty-bound, the poorest-paid and many of the hardest and most health-destroying of employments are given them as almost a monopoly. Nature has warned mankind through unnumbered centuries, since the human intelligence has been able to perceive cause and effect, that if we wanted strong nations we must have strong mothers, and if we wanted strong mothers we must safeguard the girls from overwork and all manner of economic evils: but we still turn deaf ears to the warning.

In circles of society less pressed by economic need we misuse girlhood in many other ways. The pressure upon the early precocity of the girl in school, the strain of "society" functions too elaborate and nerve-wearing for youth, the undercurrent of vulgar and wicked selling of maidenhood in legal but unholy marriage to the highest bidder in rank and money,—all these things despoil the precious and lovely freedom and joy of the potential mother. Some time we must be wiser and shield and protect, as now even the most careful parent finds it almost impossible to do alone and unaided by social customs and ways of living, what nature has asserted by her most solemn commands to be the first right of human beings of the mother-sex, namely, a happy and natural girlhood. Given that for the majority of the sex, given the right use of the period of marriage and maternity not only as related to the duty to the family but also as that may be a preparation for the best use of the later years, then indeed would the second youth of women show such fruitage in personal values and in social service as the world has not yet seen. Then would it be clearer, even to dull perception, why more women than men live to old age and why more women than men "keep the child-like in the larger mind" and hence may have many a belated spring-time of growth.

The moral of all this must be pressed home to the master forces of vocational direction and control. It must of all things be emphasized that not only is "teaching woman's organic office in the world," but that married women and mothers have done most of the teaching of all the younger children in all the past civilizations, and there are the best of reasons why they should

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

continue to do so. Instead of penalizing the marriage of women teachers the public school management of the United States should offer a premium for the marriage of these women; especially those whose proved fitness for the teacher's office presents the first diploma in the curriculum of successful motherhood. The private schools now utilize such women both as heads of schools and as teachers. The premium that should be offered by the public school system need not and should not be a continuance in the school work under the same exhausting and inexorable demands which are met by the unmarried teacher, who works so well after her many years of experience in " the system " while trying so heroically to change and improve it. The premium given the married woman-teacher, with children or of whom society may expect offspring of a needed kind, should be in freedom of choice of lines of work, in adjustable hours, and in all other details of flexibility of service needed by the housemother. Although compensation should of course be given, the scale of wages of these part-time workers should not disarrange those schedules which secure to unmarried teachers, who give uninterrupted service for a long career and who constitute the permanent staff in every school, their full share of " equal pay for women for equal work with men " in the higher competitions of professional life. Such schedules are a vital need, not only for the sake of justice but for the right use of those exceptional educators among women who, whether married or unmarried, can serve as superintendents and heads of departments in the highest positions. There is nothing more needed in education, however, than a vastly increased teaching force, and a corresponding opportunity to modify and vary the grade system, especially in the elementary schools, to suit the needs of a wider range of child capacity. We ought to have two or three part-time married women teachers to every celibate woman, younger or older, who gives whole service to the public schools. Again, the caretaking of the weak and ignorant and undeveloped, the moral protection of children and youth in recreation and in labor, the succor of the needy, and the general expression of social control and social uplift, these are woman's special functions in the social order and have ever been her peculiar responsibility. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vital need in these fields to-day is not alone for a minority of trained workers, such as the Schools for Social Workers are turning out each year, but also for a large majority of citizens devoted to the public weal and able and willing intelligently to carry out and perfect, modify and balance the schemes of the experts and "paid workers," who make "scientific philanthropy" a life work. Women will doubtless always take a larger share in this part-time service in the lines indicated than men can do; and older women, those in the third stage of life, are now entering this field with enthusiasm. As volunteers and as helpers, paid and unpaid, they are doing much of the constructive and ameliorative, the reformatory and the preventive work of social reform. When, however, women enter this field late in life, or after a merely amateur and impulsive response in earlier life to the call of social need, they enter by a vocational leap, as it were, from the inner to the outer circle of human interests. This gives, at the worst, an awkward meddling with established rules of procedure; and at best fails to give highest effectiveness. Women who have had four years of college and two years of special training in a Teacher's College or School of Philanthropy and then, after two to six years of professional work in their chosen field, marry to take charge of an individual home, are too valuable assets of educational opportunity to be left without social pressure and financial incentive to continue that work with the necessary modifications. The same is true of the minister, the lawyer and above all the doctor and the nurse, as well as of all other woman specialists in professional labor.

The difficulties of the woman-worker who marries and has children increase as we go down the scale through commercial, clerical and manual employments; but they are not insuperable; and the ingenuity of industrial mechanism needed for the higher utilization of the paid work of women in other than purely private domestic lines waits for development only for a more just perception in the common sense regarding women's work-power. The present pressure upon the wages of men that makes so many housemothers obliged to add to the family income at the worst time of their lives for economic strain, and at any work they can get, however exploited and health-destroying, is no solution of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the problem; it is an aggravation of it dire in social results. Real solutions of social problems are not worked out by people wholly "under" their circumstances.

With, however, a true solution of the problems of womanhood, achieved not by flights of fancy but by patient infinitesimal efforts of daily living in which no inherited or present duty is neglected, and no opportunity for shaping toward future conditions is ignored, we shall gain at last for social culture in all lines, and for industry in many forms, a needed class of slowly-trained, slowly-apprenticed workers in every field where women naturally excel; to rise finally at the third period of their lives to positions of command where women are now most needed. This will mean new ways of conserving hitherto exploited capacities and gifts of the mass of mankind. For women of the right sort and the right training, shielded by men's protection and care from the heaviest economic pressure during early life and developed in personality by the special demands upon them in the home, will see to it when they arrive at their rightful place of control that neither professional demand nor the industrial order shall take such a heavy toll from life itself in the effort to make a living!

"Old men for counsel?" Yes, surely, now as of old; and it is well for humanity that it learned this bit of social wisdom so early. Old women for new work for the race? Yes, surely; and well will it be for human progress when mankind learns this new lesson of social wisdom and makes fitting social use of the post-graduate mother, eager and fresh in her second youth, for a new path-finding for the feet of the coming generations before she draws down the curtain and says Good-night.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HIGH PRICES AND THE GOLD SUPPLY

JAMES S. H. UMSTED

NOTHING more timely—and absolutely related to the scientific method into the bargain—could be imagined than the proposed international commission to inquire into the causes of the high prices of commodities that have ruled for several years past, or, to put it more exactly, into the complaints of the high cost of living and the reasons therefor. As President Taft has asked Congress to make an appropriation for the expenses of our share in the work of such an investigating body,—non-partisan and merely seeking the truth as expert students,—it is to be presumed that the affair will take a definite shape within a reasonable time. Professor Irving Fisher, of Yale University, who probably deserves the credit of initiating—certainly for crystallizing—this movement, has already shown us the evidence of the support he has received from the other side, so that the commission, if the idea is not "turned down" by our over-busy-with-politics Congress, will become official and of world-scope authority. The investigations of such a body of inquiry are bound to develop much information, statistical and otherwise, and to collocate figures intelligently, so that its final report will be exceptionally valuable in every department of economic and social study. Before the results of the inquiry are formulated and published there may occur radical changes in the phenomena which inspired it; nevertheless, even in that event, the practical data that are bound to be gathered in the course of it will add largely to the supply of facts that must ever serve to guide correct financial—we may broaden the term to sociological—principles of thought and action.

Perhaps the commonest explanation of the high prices that have persisted even after there had occurred the natural rally from the "panic" depression of 1893-6, is that the supplies of new gold have been excessive. It has been so widely reiterated by writers on the subject that it has become almost a vulgar superstition, notwithstanding that authorities more recently have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

begun to doubt that the influence has been in force to the extent supposed by the majority. Such a scientific investigation as is proposed will not rest on theory or hypothesis: it will seek to hew out the facts, let them fall as they will against popular notions or inconclusive studies. It will not even reject the suggestion that there may have been an actual decrease in the influence of the recent gold output in supporting prices, forcing us to look elsewhere for the causes that brought about their present elevation. It does not follow from this that, ignoring the claims of the defenders of the Quantity Theory of money, we should deny the influence of increasing gold production upon the exchange value of commodities. No more concise and convincing a summarization of orthodoxy on this point can be found than in Mr. Horace White's *Money and Banking* (3rd ed., pp. 54-64), where he says:

"It was the opinion of Cairns and Jevons of England, of Levasseur of France, and of Soetbeer of Germany, eminent economists and statisticians of the last half century, that the great output of gold in the fifties and sixties had caused an average increase of the prices of commodities equal to about 20 per cent. In some cases the increase was greater than the average, in others less, and in still others it counteracted a decline of price which would ordinarily have taken place by reason of new inventions and improved processes of production. The four authorities named, working independently of each other, reached this opinion about thirty years ago, and it may be accepted as one of the established facts of statistical science."

Carrying the study in detail of the various index numbers of prices down to a later date than could be done by the economic leaders mentioned above, Professor Joseph French Johnson, of the New York University (*Money and Currency,* 1907 ed., ch. X, p. 214), makes this graphic summary:

"Thus we find that the movement of prices in the past, as theory would lead us to expect, has been in great cycles—now a period of increasing production of gold and silver and rising prices, and then a period of falling prices consequent upon a diminished output of the precious metals. The nineteenth century furnished four such periods—falling prices from 1810 to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1850 and from 1870 to 1896, and rising prices from 1850 to 1870 and from 1896 to 1900." *

Nevertheless there always has been a complaint by economic students that many of the charts of price movements lacked full value because of the more or less local scope of the statistics upon which they were based. Herein great progress may be made by the international commission proposed, for so authoritative a body will have the coöperation of Governments and interests widely separated geographically, and should be able, in the course of time, either to fuse the various price-data upon some level that will be world-wide in its application, or to divide the groups that may prove to be in conflict, with explanations appropriate to each variation. And doubtless it will develop more thoroughly the relative importance of the numerous "other things" which is the indeterminate modifying clause in Mills' definition of the effect of increasing or decreasing money supplies upon the value of money itself. And should it be found that as a matter of fact the increasing production of gold, in recent years, has been matched by an equal or even superior consumptive demand, these "other things" will receive the greater scrutiny as affecting the phenomena of advancing prices of commodities—such as the matter of labor union domination and restraint of labor competition, the exaction of monopoly profits by modern industrial organizations, excessive means for speculation, the failure of agricultural production to keep pace with the needs of the world's growth in population, the concentration of people in towns and cities (undoubtedly one of the causes of agricultural shortage, should that be demonstrated to exist), the tremendous destruction of capital involved in latter day wars, the elevation of the standard of living to the point of permanent habits of extravagance, and so on. So complicated has become our machinery of industrial production and distribution, so complex are modern social relations, so extensive our system of credit devices, that the operation of economic principles may

* The Hon. George E. Roberts, Director of the United States Mint, in January, 1906, published a computation of standardized index numbers carried down to 1905, showing a remarkable statistical agreement of authorities as to a still further important rise in prices, notwithstanding some reactions between 1900 and 1902.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

readily be clouded at times so darkly as to lead to a temporary misinterpretation of surface phenomena.

Probably the correct results of the proposed inquiry will be reached largely through the process of elimination. Therefore one of the first important phases of analysis will relate to the question as to how far the increase in gold production since the Witwatersrand mines were fully developed actually did affect the purchasing power of the metal; to be followed collaterally by the determination of the point as to whether the position of demand and supply has not changed so as reasonably to remove this element from the future price-problem. A study of the available statistics has convinced the writer that there has been a general misconception as to the course of the demand and supply of both gold and silver in recent years; furthermore, that the future holds the possibility of some serious questions arising in connection with the service of the metals as instruments for measuring or effecting exchanges of goods. The *standard* of value remains gold; but silver has far from lost its monetary uses in a great section of the world's population. Its demonetization among the more highly civilized nations in the last half century has put an increased burden upon gold as money, while the industrial consumption of both metals is increasing with rapid strides. The most casual student must realize the close balance, to say the least, between production and absorption. In the facts and figures which the writer purposes to submit, it may be recognized that the situation is more serious than generally supposed.

It is to the yellow metal as the world's ultimate base of credit, that we must address ourselves for the most pressing study. To analyze the position of gold in the world's social and financial organization we must examine: (1) the production—a reasonably definite proposition—and the outlook for future supplies, the latter largely a matter of speculation; (2) the character and extent of the demand for the metal and the reasonable expectations of expansion, and (3) the general relations between the money supply and the potential increase in the demands for currency and reserves. The latter two considerations necessarily somewhat overlap each other. In regarding the degree of fer-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tility of the world's mines excessive stress has been laid upon the mere figures of yearly increment.

For the moment it is advisable not to go too far back in a study of the world's gold production, for it must ultimately be brought into contrast with the world's potency of absorption and it is only within the last two decades that the data of consumption have approached statistical accuracy. The importance of the consumption of gold in the arts was first indicated by the careful investigations and analyses made by Dr. Adolph Soetbeer in the eighties: his painstaking and unprejudiced work resulted in some startling statistics during the period when bimetallism was a burning international question. The enormous absorption of gold (as well as silver) by the Far East has long been an element of high importance in reaching any economic conclusions with regard to the metal's position in the world's financial scheme: it is to-day a subject of earnest discussion in every London banking parlor. Coinage in all its phases is an essential factor in the statistics for studying any monetary question. The credit-supporting power of the world's gold mines is of vital concern to every banking interest in civilization. On all these points reliable information is yearly becoming more available and the careful studies and inquiries of the United States Mint authorities—recognized for their value more than a quarter of a century ago—have acquired even greater authority in late years. With meagre sources of information to draw upon, Dr. Soetbeer's estimates in 1885-6 of the industrial consumption of gold have been accepted as the most authoritative. But since 1893 our Mint officials, by circularization of all foreign Governments, have added really valuable estimates to the reasonably precise statistics collected annually in this country as to the use of the precious metals in art and manufacture. That year, therefore, seems to be the most desirable one from which to gather the facts justifying this essay; sequentially, to secure fairer comparisons, we should select 1893 as the starting point for an exposition of the data of gold production—always an easier element to approximate than the minutiæ of consumption.

The world's production of gold from 1893 to 1910, both years inclusive, aggregated 5,600 millions of dollars. It was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

3,400 millions more than the mines yielded in the twenty-year period 1873-92 and 2,800 millions more than from 1851 to 1872. This yield of nearly eleven billions of gold in the last sixty years is staggering when contemplated by itself. But we are concerned primarily with the fact that in the eighteen years from 1893 to 1910 the gold output has, with occasional violent intermediate fluctuations, been tapering down in the ratio of annual enlargement. In 1893 the production was 157½ millions of dollars; in 1910 it was 454¾ millions (with a preliminary estimate for 1911 of nearly 467 millions). But this great increase was due to an unusual combination of circumstances, to wit, the development of the wonderful Transvaal field and remarkable metallurgical discoveries and improvements. The latter cheapened the miner's costs and therefore spurred him to more activity. But to-day no invention to excel the cyanide process is in sight; neither are there any new fields in view which conservative experts would pretend were suggestive of a rival to the famous Witwatersrand reef. Ignoring South Africa for the time being, let us examine conditions and prospects in the gold regions elsewhere in the world.

The gold production of the United States is virtually stationary. The preliminary figures of the Director of the United States Mint indicate a total domestic yield last year of $96,233,528, compared with $96,269,100 in the final estimate for 1910, while in 1909 the output was placed at $99,673,400. The 1909 figures contrast with $94,560,000 in 1908, $90,435,700 in 1907 and $94,373,800 in 1906. We therefore have a net gain in five years of less than $2,000,000, or a trifling average of under $400,000 a year, and are actually down about 3½ millions from the record figures of 1909. Alaska has been a disappointment to those who dreamed of inexhaustible deposits in that region. It actually reported a small loss in 1911, while Colorado, notwithstanding the completion of the Roosevelt Tunnel, which has been draining the Cripple Creek mines of water, declined $1,372,640 last year because of the exhaustion of the older ore bodies. California's output fluctuates with variations in the "water season," placer mining suffering when the Sierras are scant of snow. The State's output has varied but little in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

last three years, notwithstanding the increased use of dredging operations at the placer deposits. The occasional new "finds" reported from our Arctic territory offer no promise of any change from an even gait in the output of our country.

Our northern neighbor—the Dominion—is hoping to uncover considerable auriferous wealth in the new Porcupine district of Ontario. As yet that district is not much more than a good "prospect," and its development—if it proves fertile in gold profitable to mine—will be a matter of several years. Canada's gold output reached its maximum in 1900, when the Dominion Bureau of Mines placed the total at $27,908,153. The yield fell to $8,382,780 in 1907, but rose to $10,205,835 in 1910. Mr. John McLeish, Statistician of the Department of Mines of Canada, reports to *The Financial Chronicle* of this city (a journal that keeps an excellent series of statistics of gold production) that the output for 1911 will probably show a slight increase over 1910, when the out-turn was valued at $10,205,835. The Yukon was responsible for the maximum of Canada's yield, which, as shown by these figures, has fallen over 60 per cent.

Australia has passed her apogee as a contributor to the world's golden supplies. According to a recent British Blue Book, the Commonwealth produced gold to the value of £11,556,996 in 1910. This is a decline (29 per cent.) from £16,294,684 in 1903, when Australia produced 3,836,095 ounces out of a world's total output of not quite 16,000,000 ounces. The decline has been continuous and in every one of the States of the Commonwealth. A decrease of 7 per cent. from 1910 is the estimate for last year.* Poorer ores account partly for the gradual retirement of the importance of Australia as a gold pro-

* Since preparing this article the writer has seen a letter in the London *Economist*, from its Melbourne correspondent, which gives what are evidently official figures (except for the small outputs of South Australia and Tasmania) of the production for 1911. The amount is placed at 2,488,069 ounces, valued at £10,567,665, a decrease from 1910 of £989,331, or 8.56 per cent. There is also a slight decrease in the output of New Zealand, which in 1911 produced £1,817,316, compared with £2,270,904 in 1906, its maximum year, a decrease of £453,588, or almost exactly 20 per cent. The correspondent notes that the industry is not very profitable, the calls (assessments) in some districts (such as Bendigo, in Victoria) greatly exceeding the dividends. He also points out a recent wage advance to all classes of workers, ordered by the Government authorities, which is likely to discourage still further gold-mining in Victoria.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ducer. But it has been claimed by some Australian authorities that other causes also operated, "including the superior attractions in some States to other forms of mining, the discouragement occasioned by higher costs, and the facility with which other kinds of employment can be obtained in consequence of the general prosperity."

The gold output of Russia's dominions in recent years has expanded at an annual rate within 10 per cent. For 1911 a shrinkage from 1910 of about 5 per cent. is expected by most authorities because of the prolonged drouth in Siberia during a large part of the year, hampering the working of the placer mines. Even the increase in the empire's output previous to 1911 was not of full encouragement, for some observers opine that, considering the extent of the area worked, the production on the average has been decreasing. A long-distance look may discover Russia as an influential gold producer: for some time to come her development in this regard will be under the limitations of lack of adequate capital to secure the most efficient mining equipment; deficient means of transportation, and political uncertainties. India's gold mines can be ignored: even her output, which was 630,618 ounces in 1905, was estimated by the imperial authorities at 572,120 ounces in 1910 and the forecast for the 1911 returns is substantially for the same results as in the previous year.

A little more than 5 per cent. of the world's yield of gold is derived from Mexico's mines. From 1909 to 1910 the value of this output increased about $1,100,000. The disturbed political and social conditions in the republic must have tended to reduce the 1911 output. A semi-official estimate places the silver production of Mexico last year at 4,000,000 ounces less than that of 1910, or 5.6 per cent. An approximate ratio of loss in the gold output of 1911 would equal about $1,300,000. These various shrinkages furnish in the aggregate an appreciable offset to the increase still under way in the one-time Dark Continent.

Let us now turn to the South African gold fields—the backbone of the world's reliance on sustaining the output. The Transvaal alone yields more than a third of the world's production of the yellow metal. It would be unwise to belittle the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

possibilities of Southern Rhodesia: yet the yield for the last half dozen years has been virtually at a standstill. The British South African Company has announced the output of 1911 as having a value of £2,647,894, compared with £2,178,885 in 1907, an increase of 21.52 per cent. But consider the declining ratio of increase. From 1907 to 1908 the gain in output was 16 per cent.; from 1908 to 1909 the increase was only 3.87 per cent.; in 1910 there was a decline of 2.12 per cent. compared with 1909, and while in 1911 the output again rose, the increase was but 3.10 per cent. To digress to West Africa: the output here is growing. The Chamber of Mines reports the 1911 yield at £1,069,442, contrasted with £755,985 in 1910 and £955,635 in 1909. But the 1911 increase over 1909 was only £114,000; a negligible addition when we are dealing with a world production approximating $470,000,000.

The significance of the Transvaal mines is vital. In 1910 (the latest year for which definite world estimates are available) the total production of gold increased from 1909 only 281,000 fine ounces. As the output from the Transvaal increased 702,695 fine ounces, it is evident that without the increment from that field there would have been a decline in the world's output of 421,695 ounces, or over $8,700,000 in value. According to a statement given out by the Director of the United States Mint the first of this year, the value of the 1911 gold output of the world increased about $12,000,000 over 1910. As he estimated the increase in all Africa at about $14,000,000, the world's new supplies, except for the African gain, would have shown a loss of $2,000,000. The writer would not venture to join any controversy as to the probable duration of the life of the Rand mines. Predictions in the past of the culmination of its output have not been verified: even so careful and eminent an authority as Professor W. Lexis once erred on this point. But Mr. Roberts' standing carries respect for his own expressed opinion that the Witwatersrand field is probably nearing its maximum. It was the cheapening of dynamite when the monopoly of that explosive was wiped out with the independent Boer Republic, and the erection of cyanide plants, that stimulated the great output of these mines in the last decade. To

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

adopt the statistics of the British Blue Book, aforementioned, let us review the Transvaal's history for a moment, and it will be seen that even this El Dorado has been losing on the *ratio* of its annual increase in yield. Starting with 1897, when the Transvaal had a gold production valued at £11,653,725, we shall find in 1898 a jump to £16,240,630, an increase of over 40 per cent. The war that began in 1899 cut the output down to £1,096,051 by 1901. In May, 1901, however, mine operations were resumed and by 1904 all the effects of the war were over and mining was running riot. From that year on the course of the Transvaal's output was as follows:

Year	Value	Previous year	P. c. inc. over prev. yr.
1904	£16,028,883	£12,628,057	26.93
1905	20,854,440	16,028,883	30.10
1906	24,606,336	20,854,440	18.00
1907	27,400,992	24,606,336	11.36
1908	29,973,115	27,400,992	9.39
1909	30,987,650	29,973,115	3.38
1910	31,973,123	30,987,650	3.18
1911 (est.)	*34,988,343	31,973,123	9.43

There is no doubt as to the brilliancy of the Transvaal's performance in 1911. That it can be sustained for a considerable period of years may be questioned. It may be doubted, also, whether the estimates for 1911 can be relied upon fully as representing actual new production. Some of the large companies have frequently been accused by the London press of manipulating the returns, at times by holding back ore as "reserves" and at other times turning in "reserves" to swell the figures of current production. Beginning with this year the Transvaal Chamber of Mines decided to report the amount of the ore taken from the reserves at the mines and included in the monthly returns of output. These reserves in January were 19,764 fine ounces and in March 70,143 ounces, a total of 89,907 ounces to be deducted

* Multiplying number of ounces reported by Transvaal Chamber of Mines by 4.2478, which is the quotient of the value in U. S. money of an ounce of gold divided by the U. S. equivalent of a £ sterling.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from face returns of 3,009,309 ounces for the first four months of 1912, reducing the actual new output to 2,919,402 ounces. Allowing for the mine reserves included in the March output, April's production was 737,660 ounces compared with 760,580 (net) ounces in the previous month, a decrease of 22,920 ounces. It is true, however, that the Rand supply so far this year is in excess of the corresponding period of 1911. But the labor problem is not yet settled sufficiently in the district; in fact, complaints as to the scarcity of native labor were frequent at times last year. The Kaffir "boys," as they are technically called, also often prove as unreliable as negro labor in some parts of America's cotton fields. Contract coolie labor was sought to be established in the Transvaal a few years ago; it proved most efficient, but English humanitarian sentiment (and perhaps some doubt as to the wisdom of encouraging an influx of the yellow race) compelled the big mining magnates to abandon labor-recruiting from the East.

But there is another question—that of increased costs at greater depth—which has already led to some expression of anxiety in England as to whether this great gold field can sustain its high production indefinitely,—or, rather, whether the time is not near when, to support the volume of output, there will not have to be improved mining methods and better management. The dividends declared in 1911 for all the mines of the Transvaal amounted to £8,066,436, against £9,130,958 in 1910, a decrease of £1,064,522. Dividends outside of the Rand increased £59,578; those from the Rand fell off £1,124,100. The South African correspondent of the London *Economist,* recently commenting on this showing, noted the uniformity of lower dividend declarations even among the best producers, but disputed the suggestion that the average value of ore milled must necessarily diminish with deeper mining. On the latter point he said:

"The decline cannot in all cases be said to be due to a universal decline in value with depth. It is time, however, that the impression which has so long existed that the Rand banket beds are wonderfully uniform in mode of occurrence and value was once and forever removed, because in neither can they be said

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to be uniform. . . . There can be no doubt that the prospects of gold mining on the Rand would seem to indicate that yields in the future are more likely to decline per ton of ore milled than otherwise."

Now, admitting the wonderful wealth still lying in the rocks of this great district, it is of much significance that in the first four years covered by the table given above the average annual rate of increase was 21.60 per cent., while in the following four years it was only 6.34 per cent. Such a tendency toward a diminishing rate of new output is the usual preliminary to the maximum attainment of a mining district, and so sure as history repeats itself we may expect in time to see the exhaustion of the greater part of the Rand's supply and a final slow decline, such as took place in the South American and our own Pacific gold fields and is now taking place in Australia. And if there shall develop much more gluttony for the rapid exploitation of the Transvaal's golden deposits, the sooner shall we see the depletion of this mineral store house of Kaffirland.

But, to abandon analysis of particular districts, let us examine the showing presented by the world's total production since 1893. From 1873 to 1892 inclusive, the annual output averaged about $110,000,000. From 1891 there began that rise in output which has continued almost unbrokenly to 1911 and which has served as the basis of economic alarm over the decline in the purchasing power of the yellow metal and the concomitant advance in the exchange value of commodities. Our Mint estimates place the world's yield in 1893 at $157,500,000 (in round numbers), an increase of 7.39 per cent. over that of 1892. The rapid expansion of new supplies is best shown in tabular form, the following figures (in fine ounces) giving the output by calendar years up to 1899, when interruption to the working of the Rand mines was the sequel to the struggle between Boer and Briton that was inevitable after the Jameson raid:

Date	Production	Previous year	P. c. inc. from prev. yr.
1893	$157,494,800	$146,651,500	7.39
1894	181,175,600	157,494,800	15.04

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Date	Production	Previous year	P. c. inc. from prev. yr.
1895	198,763,600	181,175,600	9.69
1896	202,251,600	198,763,600	1.75 *
1897	236,073,700	202,251,600	16.72
1898	286,879,700	236,073,700	21.52
	Average yearly increase		12.01

In 1899 came the Boer War, the production of the Rand falling almost to *nil*. Activity at the South African mines was resumed in 1901, but in 1904 the Australian yield began its rather rapid decline, offsetting to some degree the tremendous development of the Kaffir producers. Appended is the production of the world, together with the percentages of increase, in the period from 1899 to 1905, both years inclusive:

Date	Production	Previous year	P. c. inc. from prev. yr.
1899	$306,724,100	$286,879,700	6.92
1900	254,576,300	306,724,100	17.00 †
1901	260,992,900	254,576,300	2.52
1902	296,737,600	260,992,900	13.69
1903	327,702,700	296,737,600	10.43
1904	347,377,200	327,702,700	6.00
1905	380,288,700	347,377,200	9.47
	Average yearly increase		4.58

We come now to the figures of the last six years, during which the index number of commodity prices (by whichever authority you take it) was rising almost without interruption and by large percentages. And yet we find that in these recent years the percentage of increase in gold production was falling—not steadily, but still shrinking in the main. For 1911 the estimate of Mr. Roberts is taken, subject, as before noted, to possible

* This small percentage of increase from 1895 was due to considerable decrease in Russia's output; also a comparatively large falling off in Germany. In 1896 the Witwatersrand output began to rise rapidly, the Transvaal by 1898 having doubled the $40,000,000 output of 1896.

† Decrease.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

considerable revision before the final Mint estimates are made up late this year. The world's gold production from 1906 to date is shown below:

Date	Production	Previous year	P. c. inc. from prev. yr.
1906	$402,503,000	$380,288,700	5.84
1907	412,966,600	402,503,000	2.60
1908	443,006,200	412,966,600	7.27
1909	454,422,900	443,006,200	2.60
1910	454,703,900	454,422,900	0.62
1911 (pr'l. est.)	466,700,000	454,703,900	2.64
Average yearly increase			3.59

It is worth emphasis that in this last given six-year period the average annual increase is less than that of the preceding seven-year period, which included the hiatus in Africa's output. A clearer visualization of the marked decline in the ratio of increase of the world's output would be obtained if we should throw out of consideration entirely the two years (1900 and 1901) when the Transvaal was barely a factor in the total supply, its output amounting to less than $12,000,000. Two periods, divided as nearly as may be, would then present themselves as follows, the years and the consecutive percentage of increase following:

From 1895 to 1902: 7.39—15.04—9.69—1.75—16.72—21.52—6.92—13.69 per cent.; annual average for eight years, 11.59 per cent.

From 1903 to 1911: 10.43—6—9.47—5.84—2.60—7.27—2.60—0.62—2.64 per cent.; annual average for nine years, 5.27 per cent.

Despite the heavy African output in the last three years, that period shows an average annual increase of the out-turn of the world's mines of less than 2 per cent. Compared with the enormous expansion of the world's commerce and the rapid opening of new territory on all the continents to settlement or development or civilization,—even with the mere accretion of popu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lation,—this rate of expansion is far from suggesting a sustained golden flood. On the contrary, the world's gold mines—flogged as they have been to give up their wealth—are surrendering their values at a diminishing ratio suggestive of the possibility that we are approaching an era (to borrow an agricultural phrase) of *short crops*.

Without considering the question of the consumption of the precious metal by the mints and by the arts (a phase which will be treated by the writer in a second article), and without digressing too far from the simple consideration of tendency in production, it may be urged that the relation of gold supplies to the need of the metal as a part of our commercial and financial machinery should be considered whenever the arbitrary figures of output are scanned. It is a matter of dispute among economists as to how much more gold is required, when the wealth and business activities of a nation are growing rapidly, to meet the purposes of banking reserves and circulation. Professor J. Laurence Laughlin goes almost so far as to contend that a country advanced in its commercial and financial development (i. e. with extensive banking facilities and clearing house agencies) demands "no very great quantity of gold." The reverse theory, however, is held by most economists and certainly by practical bankers. It has been the wonder of students that Great Britain has been able to demonstrate that a very small percentage of reserve will carry the enormous credits used to conduct that empire's marvellous activities. Mr. Horace White (*Money and Banking*, Ch. XVI, 1908 Ed.), discussing the peculiarity by which the Bank of England holds "the reserves of the other London banks and practically those of the whole United Kingdom," estimates that the ultimate reserve of these institutions is less than 6 per cent. of their liabilities, the remaining 94 per cent. being credit, and adds: "The system under which this bank (the central concern) among many has become the keeper of the ultimate reserve of all . . . . is the growth of centuries. It was never invented by anybody, and if it did not now exist would be pronounced impossible."

Yet there is to-day a growing agitation in England directed toward inducing the joint stock banks themselves to keep larger

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reserves of gold. The general view—and one which appeals *a priori* to a practical man—is that with the expansion of the population, commerce and wealth of the world, there must be a larger necessity for greater supplies of the precious metal as a base for credit, as material for hand-to-hand exchanges and as the ultimate medium of international settlements. Where such a situation exists, for instance, as is represented by the growth in the London Bankers' Clearing House from clearings of £6,478,013,000 in 1893 and £10,119,825,000 in 1903 to £14,613,877,000 in 1911, it seems reasonable to ask for more gold in some ultimate storehouse for safety's sake. So, too, it seems natural to believe that more gold is needed in the foundations of credit when the world's commerce (as indicated by total merchandise imports and exports) is 30,000 millions, than when it was only 17,000 millions. Juraschek's *Geographisch-Statistiche Tabellen* give the figures for the world in 1895 at the equivalent of $16,923,299,000 and for 1909 at $31,315,993,000, an increase of 85.05 per cent. The average annual increase in this commerce was 6.07 per cent., whereas, as has been shown, the average annual rate of gain in the world's output in the last three years was not quite 2 per cent. If we take the compilations of the Hon. O. P. Austin, Chief of the Bureau of Statistics, at Washington, for the 1911 Statistical Abstract of the United States, we shall find that the world's commerce in 1910 was $34,616,773,000, showing an increase from 1895 of 104.55 per cent., or an annual average of 6.97 per cent. Even if we allow for duplications in the available data (for the exports of one nation may be the imports of another and *vice versa*) we shall find the same ratio of growth in excess of the late rate of gold expansion. Taking imports alone, the values in 1895 were $9,045,261,000 and in 1909 they were $16,671,234,000 and in 1910, $17,636,503,000. So the last two years given indicate a total increase of 84.30 and 94.98 per cent. respectively, or average annual gains of 6.02 and 6.33 per cent. From 1905 to 1910 the total commerce has recorded an annual average of 6.08 per cent.; in the case of imports alone, it is 5.35 per cent. There surely is need of more security in the possession of a greater supply of gold to-day than when these great interna-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional exchanges were 30 to 100 per cent. less in value. Moreover, in estimating the world's business we must consider not alone the trade between different countries, but the tremendous internal activity represented by domestic transactions in every form of barter. It would be largely a matter of guesswork to try to fix upon a percentage of annual increase in the world's commerce, regarded in the largest definition; but few statistical students, I venture to say, would fail to place it at a figure far beyond the present rate of increase in new gold production.

But it is not the purpose of the writer to press this phase of the discussion further or to enter into any controversy as to how much money a country needs to transact trade on a widening scale, or as to the safe percentage of gold reserve to a country's mass of credit instruments. It is proposed, in the sequel to this study, to take up an analysis of the actual existing consumptive demands for the precious metal and measure their extent with the volume of output. The writer hopes to suggest, if not to demonstrate to the satisfaction of critics, that there is no overproduction of gold; that unless production should increase much more rapidly than in recent years, there will be an awakening to the fact that coinage and industrial requirements are out-running the supply of material and that we shall within a reasonable time be face to face with such an appreciation in the purchasing power of gold, that the use of it in the arts may become impracticable by reason of its costliness, if it is to remain money as well as the standard of value.*

* A complementary article, *Is Gold Redundant?* will be published in the next number.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TOXEMIA AS A STIMULUS IN LITERATURE

CHARLES B. REED, M.D.

IT may sound paradoxical to claim that the presence of a poison in the circulation could result in anything but unhappiness and poverty, yet there is much evidence that such a condition, whether wittingly or unconsciously acquired, may give a strong impetus to literary production.

To establish the thesis it is necessary to show that poisons (toxins) and similar morbific agents may and do exercise a definite and inspiring influence upon the imaginative and creative faculties and that such toxins at appropriate times are present in the blood.

As a preliminary, let us consider one of the simpler intellectual processes. To secure the greatest satisfaction, not alone in operation, but especially in results, the brain should work harmoniously—all the faculties should functionate in close correspondence if not in actual unison.

This power of concentration is innate in some individuals, and may be acquired by others with considerable effort, while to others indeed it is not only unattainable but entirely unknown. The first possibility is the most desirable and rare, and the last, while common, is valueless. The intermediate form concerns us here, for the acquisition of this power is attended by many interesting circumstances and not a few failures.

The most human and effective degree of the accomplishment is characterized by Murisier as the "systemization of the personality." Systemization may be acquired in many ways. For instance, in the course of growth an irresponsible boy, whose thoughts, ideas and feelings, like a weathercock, respond to external stimuli through the senses, is suddenly thrown upon his own resources. He accepts the challenge, and in consequence develops a self-reliance and a decision of character that put all his actions under the dominion of his coördinated faculties. He assumes control of his personality by systemizing his divergent impulses. He correlates his subjective ideals or feelings with objective conditions and has a working hypothesis. A similar

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but more dramatic transformation may follow a physical injury, as the experiences of Cervantes and Loyola so excellently illustrate.

The most numerous and probably the best examples of the condition are to be found among the reactions to emotion. Strong deep feeling systemizes the personality and gives it stability, intensity and tenacity. Such factors are love, hatred, ambition, greed, religion and transiently profound anger. During periods of unusual stress or tension, as from war, national expansion or disaster, from private grief or great love, many minds are emotionally exalted. In consequence, as history shows, the literary product is increased and improved as compared with times of mental peace and commercial prosperity.

Without overlooking the almost universal sway of love in this relation, it is probable that among the Christian nations, both in war and peace, the most effective systemizing emotion is religion. Its influence is as widespread as love and far more lasting. Moreover, in this abundant field of emotional experiences it is easy to find one that exhibits the significance and mode of action of systemization. Conversion is a conspicuous instance. An individual who has given little or no attention to religious matters or whose thoughts have been confused by conflict of the sects or the claims of antagonistic zealots may meet with a crisis or an experience that stirs his feelings or awakens his mind to some new and appealing aspect of the subject. He ponders over this, and all at once it becomes convincing—he accepts it as a truth and immediately his faculties marshal themselves into harmonious ranks, permanently obedient to the dominant emotion. Henceforth all acts, thoughts and feelings are regulated and governed by this polarized state of the personality. Among its happiest phases is an increased sense of power and the recognition of an inner feeling of harmony that the initiate technically terms peace. The individual is happy, not like the gourmand or the voluptuary who has satisfied his appetite, but like him who hears tidings of great joy, the gambler successful in play or the ambitious man whose hopes are realized.

The same result is achieved, at least temporarily, by prayer. The individual abandons or compels himself to a period of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

undisturbed meditation—solitary concentration. The tense feelings relax, the faculties align themselves harmoniously, the distractions are composed and a feeling of peace and comfort ensues. Out of this peaceful mood, out of this orderly activity of the faculties, there comes frequently a solution of difficulties so clear, so rational and so sudden withal that it may well be regarded as divine in origin.

Having once experienced the joy and satisfaction of mental harmony, the individual next strives by propagandism to bring his human environment into a close and sympathetic relationship and to adjust his material surroundings so as to protect his inner happiness from hostile intrusions. In old communities and faiths, or among men of settled habits and convictions, the irritation and resentment felt at the appearance of new ideals and methods is due to the disturbance of this painfully acquired unity of thought and feeling or to the fear that it will be disturbed.

In a state of unification, when every faculty is contributing to the general good, the work is done so easily and pleasurably that the most as well as the best is accomplished. It happens, however, that some personalities, from the very first, are "badly cemented," like the so-called "artistic temperament," and even in the presence of joy, grief, or such major emotions as religion or intense interest in one's vocation, there exists a strong tendency to relapse into the unsystemized habit. In these cases the faculties work inharmoniously, there is much jar of the mental machinery. Discomfort, unhappiness, waste, neurasthenia and various functional disorders develop which formerly were attributed to the Evil One. When, therefore, a dominating idea, personality or influence produces systemization under such conditions, it is easy to realize how those miraculous cures are wrought which forever, among the ignorant, form the basis and support of quackery, both in medicine and in religion.

It is not necessary to follow this part of the subject further. Its importance is manifest, and to one who feels or appreciates these mental differences any effort or any sacrifice seems demanded if thereby the anxieties, the vagrant and shapeless longings of an unfocussed mind can be replaced by the blessings of systemization. In the absence of a compelling emotion or in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terest, the individual endeavors to reproduce the condition by artificial and external means. With so docile an organ as the brain this can be accomplished in several ways, but the simplest, the quickest and readiest at hand is by drugs.

It is a physiologic law that all substances which tend to depress and destroy the functions of the nervous system begin by acting as stimulants. By virtue of this, certain poisons—toxins—which may be in reality only variable forms of food-stuffs, have the power to create a harmony of the faculties with the same sense of peace and well-being that one derives from prayer, but the effect is no more permanent. The drug also requires frequent repetition and, like all artificialities, may in time lose its effect. Among literary workers such experiences are especially common, but for clearness it is desirable to cite some extreme instances.

Coffee may be taken as the type of these substances, for its essential qualities are so well defined that one critic has claimed the ability to trace throughout the works of Voltaire those portions which came from coffee inspiration. Balzac also is known to have been devoted to this stimulant and frequently used it for fifteen or twenty consecutive hours of toil. Moreover, its harmonizing effect is by no means restricted to the solitary. Friends celebrate their happiness and enemies compose their differences under its genial influence, while whole communities have been systemized in the banquet hall or the coffee-house.

Tea acts similarly and suggests De Quincey, who drank it from eight o'clock at night till four in the morning when engaged in his literary work. He called it "the beverage of the intellectual." Dr. Johnson also produced his dictionary with the support supplied by its excessive use. The knowledge of its power is not new, for a learned Chinese philosopher declared over a thousand years ago that "tea tempers the spirits, harmonizes the mind, dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue." Similar praises sung by the votaries of tea and coffee are not exceeded by the hymns to the saints among the old religionists.

Tobacco is another of the milder aids whose use is well-nigh universal. Maeterlinck is a recent and conspicuous example of the literary man who confesses that for years he was unable

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to write his best without smoking. He indulged himself with increasing amounts until he found that, instead of rousing the brain to activity as before, the enormous dosage was acting as a depressant, so he replaced it with a de-nicotinized leaf that satisfied in a measure the irresistible mechanical craving.

The choice of a systemizer is largely a question of taste. Balzac, content with his coffee, spoke of tobacco with horror, and Victor Hugo rejected it from a conviction that smoking converted thought into reverie.

In many instances, however, the trifling assistance afforded by these toxins is insufficient or they lose their effect in time, even when used in enormous quantities, and then stronger agents are required.

De Quincey for many years cemented his personality with opium, which he preferred to wine. He says: "Opium introduces among the faculties the most exquisite order, legislation and harmony, sustains and reinforces the self-possession and communicates serenity and equipoise." Again he states: "If in early days I had understood the subtle powers of opium to tranquillize all irritations of the nervous system, to stimulate the capacities for enjoyment, and to sustain for twenty-four consecutive hours the else drooping animal energies—most certainly knowing or suspecting this I should have inaugurated my opium career in the character of one seeking extra power and enjoyment rather than one shrinking from extra torment."

Coleridge and many others whose histories may or may not be known relied on opium, while still others have resorted to more insidious or intensive poisons like strychnine, arsenic, cocaine, chloral or hashish. De Maupassant relates that every line of *Pierre et Jean* was written under the influence of ether intoxication. It is probable, however, that the greater number of brain workers have organized their personalities like Poe, Burns, de Musset and Glück on some form of alcohol.

The action of this drug on the nervous system resembles physiologically that of the rest of the group. The effect is best described by James, who says: "The sway of alcohol over mankind is unquestionably due to its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature, usually crushed to earth by cold facts

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and dry criticism of the sober hour. Sobriety diminishes, discriminates and says *no*; drunkenness expands and says *yes*. It is, in fact, the great *yes* function in man. It brings its votary from the chill periphery of things to the radiant core. It makes him for the moment one with truth. Not through mere perversity do men run after it. To the poor and unlettered it stands in the place of symphony concerts and literature; and it is part of the deeper mystery and tragedy of life that whiffs and gleams of something that we immediately recognize as excellent should be vouchsafed to many of us only in the fleeting earlier phases of what in its totality is so degrading a poisoning."

In *The Right of Way* also we may recall Charley Steele, cold and cynical, where he soliloquizes after his wonderful speech: "What a discovery I have made! I was dull, blank, all iron and ice; the judge, the jury, the public, even Kathleen against me; and then that bottle there—and I saw things like crystal, I had a glow in my brain, I had a tinge in my fingers; and I had success." Thus he rose above his environment, he secured control of his personality and all the stiff, inactive, inhibited faculties fell into harmonious relation and began to work.

II

Hitherto we have limited our inquiry to one point, the natural or artificial systemization of the personality as a means of promoting intellectual effort; and to the writer no proposition could be more evidently true, for this is the state wherein the masterpieces of the world have been executed. That this condition can be and is produced by certain toxins I think would be admitted by the most sceptical reader. It remains then to correlate these findings with our theory. First, however, let us pursue our examination a little further and discover, if possible, a physical source for the toxins and make the connection quite clear before we reach the application.

It is well established that toxins are formed in the body as a product of tissue change and under ordinary conditions they are excreted or absorbed without attracting much attention. Whether toxins are potential food stuffs, or reagents simply,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cannot be stated, but that they are powerful factors in the bodily welfare is not to be denied. For instance, we may mention carbon dioxide as not merely a poison, but one that is really essential to life.

If one should inquire why you breathe, you would probably make the obvious but incorrect reply that the body needs oxygen. Oxygen indeed is necessary, but however great the necessity it would never be satisfied if the chemical processes of the body did not elaborate an excess of carbon dioxide. This toxin circulates in the blood, stimulates the respiratory centre and compels respiration, with the result that oxygen is taken in.

Getting one's "second wind" is another remarkable transformation through toxemia. "In this surprising phenomenon," says James, "the fatigue gets worse up to a certain point, when gradually or suddenly it passes away and one is fresher than before. We have evidently tapped a level of new energy masked until then by the fatigue obstacle usually obeyed. A third or fourth wind may supervene." It is an interesting physiological fact that among paired organs one functionates better than its twin, and therefore assumes the leadership and does a larger share of the work. This is as true of the cerebral hemispheres as of the ears and kidneys, while the so-called "master eye" is a familiar example that has long been recognized. The explanation of "second wind" still further illustrates the physiologic advantages of toxins.

From tissue activity the various waste products in the form of toxins are squeezed out of the cells into the intercellular spaces and are taken up by the circulation. The quantity increases until the system is saturated and fatigue ensues. With a continuance of exertion the toxins accumulate until they set in action a new process whereby an anti-toxin is formed. The fatigue toxin is neutralized, the balance restored and the functioning tissue, indeed the entire organism, is lifted to that higher level of performance commonly called the "second wind," while in the case of pairs the associated organ is brought into powerful and harmonious activity with its fellow. Physical systemization has been effected. Although not entirely germane, it may not be uninteresting to mention that natural sleep is nothing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more than a stuprous form of unconsciousness resulting from an accumulation of toxins. It is immaterial whether toxins develop from ordinary tissue change like fatigue or from overeating, from under-excretion or over-production.

An entirely different class of toxemias results from germ invasions. In these cases, however, the product is a foreign body, and when taken up by the circulation it must be and is oxidized or burnt in an intricate chemical process accompanied by a liberation of heat which is called fever.

None of the phenomena hitherto reviewed is pathological, and none is necessarily attended by fever unless exhaustion supervenes. Even in disease the elaboration of toxins may or may not be followed by a rise of temperature, since this depends upon the character of the toxin as well as the ability of the body to dispose of it. In certain cases the physiologic effect of a toxin may be quite easily observed or predicted. Such a substance, more or less diluted with blood, flows over the sensitive cerebral surfaces; the rapidity of the associative functions is slightly increased, the person feels extremely well and his conversation is coherent and brilliant. If the stimulation is pushed up to the point of systemic supersaturation, then coma, delirium or some intense and uncontrollable excitement may ensue in which the ideas tumble over one another in rapid confusion. There are authentic instances of coherent poetic composition during delirium; but usually when stimulation is carried to excess, wreckage of the machine will follow. The disorder generally presents one of the forms of insanity of which the psychosis of exhaustion is the type. It is not difficult, therefore, to see that the two varieties of delirium described by Plato may differ only in degree and in the amount of toxin thrown out or absorbed.

To carry the argument to its logical end would lead us into the enticing realms of ecstasy, possession, pythonism and other forms of divination that are closely related to the fixed idea. Here also would belong that spirit of prophecy so frequently present just before death, as in Shakespeare's *Henry VI,* when the intellect is cleared of all distortions and the systemization is untrammelled by a consciousness of external objects. This investigation is beyond the bounds of our inquiry, so we must re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turn to the question of disease, where the toxic relationship is more apparent. Let us now consider the clinical evidence.

III

Among the non-febrile affections that are under suspicion as stimulants to intellectual activity may be mentioned asthma, which is represented in literature by Macaulay, and in statesmanship by William III. In confirmation, however, we can present no data except the numerous cases that might be quoted.

In this category also is gout, which takes its origin not from micro-organisms, but from disturbances of the bodily metabolism, and is characterized by fever only at the crises. It is fallacious, but interesting, to find that, while this disease formed barely one per cent. of the chronic medical disorders of the past, over five per cent. of its victims were literary workers. The effect observed is similar, as we shall see, to that found in bacterial diseases, but the method of operation is quite different. In place of the optimism and feverish intensity, there is a massive, patient energy; without haste, to be sure, but also without rest.

One writer goes so far as to compare these classes with presumptively normal individuals and asserts that those afflicted with gout, judged by their books, are superior in imagination, style and intellectual power to any equal number of healthy workers who can be chosen. Without attempting to substantiate this predication, the evidence shows that Gibbon was urged onward by a stately but irrepressible momentum for which his literary occupation afforded only a partial outlet.

Bulwer Lytton's irritability and melancholy were widely known, and so, too, was his desperate devotion to work and tobacco. Gibbon and Lytton were great sufferers from gout and thoroughly exemplify the class which included Landor, Campbell, Milton, Steele, Sydney Smith, Dryden, Fielding, De Foe and many others in literature; Rubens and Claude Lorraine among the painters; actors like Charles Kean, and statesmen like the Pitts.

These unhappy owners of creative brains were the victims

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of their organizations. They were compelled to work by the toxins they elaborated, and it is not too much to say that the periods of active production probably stood in close relation to the ebb and flow of the toxic tide. Just as the mental state of the diabetic is active and clear in inverse proportion to the amount of sugar secreted, or as the chills and fever of the malarial patient correspond to the successive generations of the malarial organism, so the fluctuations of the artistic temperament may easily correspond to the variations in quantity of an energetic, if unknown, toxin. In these highly sensitized beings every degree of change is temperamentally well marked and varies from gloomy self-reproach and transient melancholia to the exaltation of a conscious inspiration. So, too, when the poison of gout is in the blood the mind is overclouded; when it focusses in the joint the mind is clear and vigorous.

A gouty patient told Wigan (Nisbet) that at times another person seemed to be thinking with his brains and telling him things he knew to be false, and that he had great difficulty in restraining himself from uttering these unworthy sentiments as his own. He got continually worse, until suddenly the gout precipitated in his toe, his brain freed itself from the delusions and his reasoning became extraordinarily acute.

In the non-febrile class must be mentioned the experience of Parkman, since it is pertinent to the general subject, although the nature of his affliction apparently was not determined. His biographer, Farnham, says that his difficulty was not in arousing but in restraining his faculties. His most intimate literary companion, Dr. Ellis, wrote that his maladies intensified his impulses to exertion and mental application, while they limited the hours he could wisely give to reading and writing.

Heine's case was similar. William Sharp says that: "In 1846 the mysterious pains had greatly increased and it had become evident that something more terrible than paralysis had taken possession of the enfeebled frame. But as the body died the mind more gloriously effloresced, like the fantastic flower of Borneo, which displays its richest blooms as the stem rots to the root. New ideas, fresh impulses, creative instincts arose within him; his mental horizon widened, the atmosphere became

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rarefied, the perspective more alluring and vast. Yet it was during the last three years of suffering that the genius of the poet reached the climacteric. It was then he produced that wonderful series of poems collectively entitled *Romancero*. Here every phase of Heine's genius is visible; here he is sombre, imaginative, tender, graceful, ironical, exquisitely delicate and grossly cynical, and here moreover the variety and extent of his metrical skill must astonish and delight the critic." During the same period he produced a libretto entitled *Der Doktor Faust,* a prose phantasy called *The Gods in Exile, The Confessions, The Last Poems, The Atta Troll* and *Vermischen Schriften.*

In considering toxemia as a stimulant we must remember that cerebral congestion alone is an excitant to cerebral activity and some writers have resorted to mechanical aids to obtain this favorable condition. Schiller with his feet in ice water and Shelley extended on the floor with his head close to an open fire are convenient examples. It is, of course, impossible to say how much of the effect is due to congestion from fever and how much to the toxin that gives rise to the fever.

It was known to the ancients that a slight fever stimulated cerebration, or as one author says: "Febris modica, idearum fecunditatem et eloquium dat." This opinion was confirmed by Albrecht Haller, the eighteenth century physiologist and poet, who observed several times how much more freely his verse flowed when he was feverish.

Other factors undoubtedly influence the result, for individuals react differently to the same or different toxins, and it is probable that no two diseases or individuals evolve toxins in the same quantity or potency.

IV

It is among the febrile affections that the stimulating qualities of toxins are most clearly exhibited. Pulmonary tuberculosis may be selected as the type. This disease is offered in support of the thesis not alone on account of its bacterial origin and the peculiar suitability of its toxins, but because its frequency and chronicity provide ample opportunities for study.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The general appearance of the individual is quite characteristic. The centres of life are all in an exalted state, the eyes shine with a brilliant but unnatural lustre, and the cheeks burn with the typical hectic flush. The mind acts with clearness and force—with that quick sympathetic responsiveness which makes the carrier of this disease so entertaining and companionable. The world looks as bright and the prospect of recovery as certain to these optimists as Heaven to the religious enthusiast. The nervous system is keyed up, the blood pressure high, the sexual centres are strongly stimulated and all the tottering functions of the body are driven relentlessly forward.

In exemplification of these effects extracts from the letters and biography of J. Addington Symonds may be presented. These interesting observations on his physical condition and emotional states begin in 1869 and last for seventeen years. Only a few of them need to be quoted, prefaced by some external evidence. A pupil of Symonds says: "We had before us the example of a man continually struggling with ill health, grievously handicapped in the career of life, yet never complaining, but rather rejoicing and dedicating himself heart and soul, mind and body to the achievement of the work." This one sentence describes perfectly the impression which such a patient usually produces among his associates. What a picture of Stevenson!

Symonds himself says: "At present I am plagued by a constant desire to use my brains for work, to store up knowledge for future use." In 1870, shortly before his own death, Dr. Symonds said to his son: "You have just enough nervous strength for the common requirements of life. You cannot draw upon the fund of energy without peril to your health." "In fact," says the son, "he had resigned all expectation of my making a mark in the world, for I had now reached my 31st year. Yet what I still contained of slumbering force was now on the point of bursting into sudden activity." Again in 1874 he says: "These chest colds do not agree with sober work, but they do not exactly disagree with some sorts of irregular intellectual activity—so I have been in a blaze of poetry of late, reading and writing." When we consider that what a tubercular patient

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

calls a "cold" is in reality an exacerbation of his disease, the statement is significant.

Then in 1876 he speaks of the amount of work accomplished and the conditions as follows: "The summer was spent in hard work upon the third volume of *The Renaissance*. My physical vigor considerably abated. I took severe colds, which left me exhausted. . . . We went to Riederlap, and there, in the midst of damp fogs that crept into our rooms through the chinks in the log-built walls, *The Renaissance* advanced rapidly—at a feverish speed which told of diminishing energy. My father's dying prediction had been fulfilled. The tax upon my nervous strength during four years of intense and feverish industry exhausted my constitution."

The next year he observes: "Chronic fever was upon me and I had the recklessness of the disease—the curious fretful energy of one tormented by a persistent drain on his vitality." A little later, while recovering from a dangerous hæmorrhage and arranging his affairs for the end which he thought was impending, he remarks: "For the rest I exercised my literary faculty in such light work as I could do—translating the sonnets of Michael Angelo and Tommaso Campanella. Never have I felt happier in the soul than during the weeks when my life was hanging by a thread and when the sensuous faculties remained in abeyance—the real man, the self that is immortal, being left open only to intellectual influences."

Three years afterwards he adds the following testimony: "I think an exaggerated report of my illness has got abroad. On the whole the doctor believes my lung better than it was last spring, but I have had six weeks of very bad health. In the last eight months I have written two volumes of *The Renaissance in Italy* (except three chapters). I have prepared the American edition of my studies of the Greek poets and all my Italian sketches. To the new English edition of *The Age of Despots* I have added one hundred pages, as well as a great amount of minute alterations. So you see my hands are full. If I did not work with almost abnormal facility I should not have got through with the mere grind. But I am afraid that this facility

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

does not mean less but more rapid and instinctive cerebration than in the case of slower workers."

In 1882 he writes from Davos to H. F. Brown a little summary of his condition in which this occurs: "If I am doomed to decline now I can at least say that in the five years since I came here dying I have had a very wonderful Indian summer of experience. The colors of life have been even richer, my personal emotions even more glowing, my perception of intellectual points more vivid, my power over style more masterly than when I was comparatively vigorous. It seems a phase of my disease that I should grow in youth and spiritual intensity inversely to my physical decay. It is almost pain to grasp the loveliness of the world with so much intensity when the body is so dragging."

During the year 1886, five years before his death from tuberculosis, he completed Volumes VI and VII of *The Renaissance in Italy,* wrote a biography of Sidney for the *English Men of Letters,* a *Life of Ben Jonson* for the series of *English Worthies,* prepared a volume of selections from Johnson, an edition of Sir Thomas Brown, an article on Tasso for the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* and began and finished the translation of Cellini.

Without offering it as an apology, Symonds mentions that during the latter part of this time he was troubled by an inflammation of the eyes which prohibited their use and made his work on the Cellini extremely difficult. In concluding the extracts, it is proper to add that during the period to which these references apply two of his four children were born. Symonds' letters most happily support our argument, because his habit of introspection supplied him, and therefore us, with much personal psychology and many subjective reactions that others either have not discovered or have not published. Novalis, Keats, Sterne, the Brontë sisters, and especially Sidney Lanier and R. L. Stevenson, would furnish many contributory facts if space permitted.

Two or three striking testimonials from Stevenson, however, must be included. For instance, while prostrated by a pulmonary hæmorrhage he wrote out in three days the first drafts of *Jekyl and Hyde.* During this period his toxic stimulation was so great and his mental systemization so complete that he neglected

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for hours at a time to remove the thermometer that had been placed in his mouth. To this should be added his wife's observation from Hyères. She says: "After a terrible hæmorrhage he fell a victim to sciatica and was temporarily blind from ophthalmia. All light was excluded on account of his eyes and his right arm was bandaged to his side on account of the hæmorrhage. To circumvent fate he had a large board covered with paper laid across his bed and on this or on a large slate he wrote out, with his left hand, most of the poems in the *Child's Garden of Verses*."

The positive value of these citations is emphasized by evidence from Vailima that is highly important, since it exhibits the mental conditions prevailing in the absence of the stimulation upon which he had learned to depend. Under the influence of a favorable climate and life out of doors Stevenson's lungs improved greatly and "his bodily health and vigor," as Colvin says, "kept at a higher level than during the previous year." The tubercular process was apparently arrested. What was the result? Necessarily the quantity of toxins thrown out was diminished, or at least did not exceed the dosage to which he was accustomed and he keenly felt the deprivation. Colvin says that during this year (1894) Stevenson found himself unfit for serious imaginative writing, and the consciousness of the loss caused him many misgivings. On January first Stevenson wrote Charles Baxter about this new and, to him, distressing development in the following words: "I am come to a dead stop. I never can remember how bad I have been before, but at any rate I am bad enough just now, I mean as to literature; in health I am well and strong. I take it I shall be six months before I shall be heard of again." Unhappily his death from apoplexy eleven months later interfered with the further development of our theory, but the writer does not doubt that a subsequent exacerbation of the tubercular infection would have been accompanied by a period of unusual literary activity.

Even in childhood Stevenson was peculiarly liable to dream during sleep. This phenomenon which, like Symonds, Hearn and other "sensitives," he possessed in an exaggerated form, is now recognized as a frequent expression of toxemia. Is it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

illogical, then, to assert that the exuberant fancies which throng such easily systemized brains during waking hours are largely toxic in origin?

In addition to the suggestive symptoms hitherto mentioned, Symonds frankly confesses that he was compelled to labor unremittingly except when complete exhaustion supervened. Whether this exhaustion signified a toxic supersaturation or one of the lethargies that the disease sometimes exhibits cannot be stated, but on such occasions he secured the only respite possible this side of death. The restless intellect conceived new schemes with unceasing profusion and the result in regard to time expended is a literary output of exceptional quantity. The quality, too, was greatly improved since it represented the best the brain could be incited to produce—it was the very essence, subtly refined, of all that high courage, vivacity and spirit intense and rare.

Among the members of this extensive class we may mention as types the actress Rachel, the artist Albrecht Dürer, and Chopin, the musician.

V

Other forms of microbic disease with or without suppuration and other toxic fevers may produce similar conditions. In these as well as in non-bacterial disturbances the effect is not infrequently associated with depression of the feelings rather than exaltation. This variation in no way controverts the theory, but rather conforms to the recognized course of what may be termed inspirational composition. It would appear that the results of functional performance, especially in artistic fields, are definitely tinctured by the optimism or pessimism that characterizes the action of the toxin.

In mild intoxication, using the word in its proper sense, the fancy may be floridly stimulated or a somewhat different quantity or variety of toxin reveals its physiologic effect in a true, poetic melancholy, while if the coefficient be still further increased the individual will exhibit the subjective and objective signs of disease.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Unfortunately the identity of the toxins is entirely unknown, and yet from a literary standpoint it must be important, since many toxins produce a sense of exhaustion. In this connection an illuminating comparison can be made between the stimulating toxins of tuberculosis and the stupefactive intoxications of an ordinary tonsilitis.

Experiments on cerebral tissue with different poisons and stimuli show that when the sensory centres are predominantly irritated the result is visions, dreams and non-productive reveries that may end in stupor, while the excitation of the motor centres produces a fussy, bustling, purposeless activity. If, however, both respond equally, then coherent effort is initiated, which may find expression in art, literature, philosophy or generalship.

It is hardly necessary, except for emphasis, to call attention again to the salient points in these cases. The mental irritability, the insatiable desire to functionate, the immense amount of work accomplished, the ease and pleasure in its performance and the inevitable unhappiness when the mind reacts from the systemized high pressure—these are significant symptoms of toxemia, whether arising from within or without, from emotion or drugs, from food-stuffs or disease.

It may be urged against the thesis that the examples selected were chosen cunningly, but it is hardly possible on the contrary to choose subjects who are not addicted to artificial systemization in some form or degree. The coincidence of certain diseases with intellectual and artistic achievement is too frequent to be accidental and too potential to be without significance.

It may be urged, too, that the use of drugs for this purpose or the presence of disease is by no means limited to the artistic class, and yet the number of artists is not thereby increased. Many have achieved eminence in the arts without a demonstrable pathology, but it is possible that a larger success might have come earlier, although not so pleasantly, if the normal functions had been intensified by a toxemia. In the case of Wordsworth it is not wholly inconceivable that a stimulating toxin or an addiction to alcohol might not have caused an uprush from the subliminal consciousness that would have added the vital spark to much that seems prosaic and uninspired.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We delight in the picture of a man fighting gallantly against desperate odds, and is it not comforting to believe that out of that fierce mêlée the work of his life may emerge chastened and elevated, a work stronger and clearer in text, a message enhanced and supremely refined?

We are not prepared at present to insist that toxins are essential to achievement, nor that an obscure toxin will convert mediocrity into genius, but rather to suggest that the presence of such a substance in the circulation may, and does in many instances, accelerate and intensify the expression of existent intellectual tendencies. It is proposed that the artistic unit has not attained his eminence in spite of a serious toxemia, but possibly on account of it.

In estimating the importance of the tubercular toxin we must remember that this disease is rarely found alone and unmixed with other infections. This would suggest the possibility that other agents might be, if not leading, at least accessory factors in the result. It happens, however, that the tubercular toxin has been isolated and is employed daily in the management of tuberculosis. Its physiologic action has been repeatedly observed and its stimulating property is incontestable.

In conclusion we must acknowledge that many of us feel deep regret for our favorite author when he has been swept by a ruthless malady into an untimely grave. We lament the loss of those possibly productive years, and yet while de Musset lived to the age of forty-seven, he produced nothing of consequence after the age of thirty, despite every kind of stimulation. Is it not plausible that other authors may have completed their careers, or nearly so, at the time of death? May not the sum of literary activity be practically the same as if the author lived longer, except that it was crowded into a briefer time?

Besides the sense of personal deprivation, is there not some ground for satisfaction? Instead of mourning the loss of what might have been, may we not rather congratulate ourselves and the author that under the stimulating influence of a chronic and ultimately fatal disease he has accomplished a work probably larger in quantity and certainly better in quality than under the leisurely conditions of health if he had outlived his expectancy?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMIEL

VAN WYCK BROOKS

AMIEL was a true child of Geneva, and he had in him the inheritance of those three greatest of Genevese, Calvin, Rousseau, and Madame de Stäel. Like them he was Teutonic in soul, French in everything but soul. It was this racial conflict, peculiarly Genevese, which in him reached its tragical climax.

The Teutonic element appears in Calvin as an immense, brooding, fatalistic sense of destiny and sin; in Rousseau as an all-dissolving sentimentality; in Madame de Stäel as a type of Hegelian pantheism, half-sibylline. These are qualities of the inner disposition; they proclaim fundamental origins which the French tongue and tradition have only succeeded in rendering paradoxical. And accordingly we see in Calvin the clear and skilful dialectician, in Rousseau and Madame de Stäel the social and political reformer. All these qualities meet in Amiel, but without an external cause, without an object of devotion. In him the French and German influences sterilize one another. His whole existence is a state of mind, too lacking in passion, in development, in one-sidedness to result in any *fait accompli.* Nowhere shall we find a more tangible illustration of the familiar conflict between the soul and its embodiment,—for in him the conflict is biological and springs from a fatal mixture of blood.

II

After passing through every phase of culture, after generating in himself by an almost universal sympathy the mood of the poet, the priest, the martyr, the invalid, the savant, the courtier, the soufi, the little child, the virtuoso, the mother—he remains through all and to the end, intellectually and spiritually, the orthodox Calvinistic Protestant. Everything reduces itself, he says, to the question of sin. That is what baffles his French critics, who expect a man of his intellectual experience to stand

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

out finally with a positive rather than a negative doctrine. Well, clearly as we may and must more and more come to see the truth of Calvinism as an explanation of how things actually are in this world of election or damnation by heredity,—as a kind of *sociological programme,* that is,—on the spiritual plane it springs from an unfruitful egoism: the personal despair of a personal salvation, which presupposes an unnatural friction between the laws of human life and the laws of the universe. Surely no conception was ever so perfectly adapted to be the philosophy of men of action. All great men of action have been fatalists. Fatalism has provided them with so much the more grist for opposition, for conquest, for a dramatic purgation on the human stage. Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon would not have risen to such magnificent heights if they had conceived their struggle to be with a mere world of men. Humanity alone, to them so contemptible, could never have produced in them such a grand fury. They felt themselves battling with the elements, they concentrated in the single-handed struggle of an individual against a species all the mad aspiration of nature to outdo itself, to suppress the weak, and then to suppress the strong, and the stronger, and the strongest. They felt themselves battling with destiny. But what is the spiritual mood of these supermen of action? Contempt for others, ennui in themselves. Napoleon was full of it. Cromwell was full of it,—Cromwell most of all, because with him it represented a reasoned programme, illustrated a philosophy, that of Calvin. But in the world of art and religion this philosophy and all its children fail. Because art and religion spring, not from opposition, but from acceptance,—they represent the delight of the spirit in free contact with the infinite.

For that reason Amiel's pursuit of the ideal, of the perfect universal freedom had something pathological about it. It was the Calvinistic negation, raised from the social to the spiritual plane, which prevented him from seeing that certain of the simplest and most elemental functions of life are in themselves ideal, free because they spring from a glad acceptance of the laws of nature. Amiel felt that not only the expressions of being were limited, but being itself, because he conceived by hereditary instinct that some worm was at the core of things,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the ideal itself was tainted. Who does not know how the Puritan mind, even when most emancipated by study, by sympathy, by divination, by the purest and most spontaneous delight in things, can return to itself with a kind of cantankerous obstinacy! And Amiel was sufficiently a poet to take his color, not from reason or from experience, but from the instinctive life of the heart which makes every poet the spokesman of an inherited mood.

Whether as a man, a poet, or a philosopher, Amiel was incomplete. One thing he chose wisely—solitude: his relations with the outside world were purely conventional, no task upon his energy. The solitude of Amiel had all the beauty of the truly contemplative life, a *feeding* solitude, active and responsive, where the world of nature and man were all the more imminent and suggestive, a solitude accessible to a thousand objects of intimate study, in which a special nature collects and matures its forces in the most abundant harmony with its own laws. But even then, after giving up the world, how much a man has to give up! What are the laws of any nature? Alas! they are ill-defined and everyone has in him the beginnings of almost every type. And having given up the world, Amiel was unable to give up anything else. If great works, whether of intellect or character, spring from the passionate, single-minded cultivation of one grand, preponderant aim, if they are fed with emotion and have in them the ripeness and richness of a whole rounded and devoted nature, there has to be something monumental about the life they spring from, a gradual building and piling of one stone upon another, a proportion, a subordination. There has to be a point where one's division of interests, the scattering tendency of life, is brought up sharply by something inflexible, narrow, concrete. How few natures can, like Goethe's, build on many foundations and link them all together in a gigantic whole! How much intensity, how much character, what happy auspices, are necessary in this free, this unresisting universe, for the production of one small, worthy work! For Amiel, who believed he possessed the power to widen his ego until it became identical with the universe, who believed that he could identify himself with any fragment of the objective world

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—for Amiel, in reality, only the ego and the subjective existed. For him those numberless unfulfilled existences that make up the poet's life clamored for actual embodiment. Unable to live disinterestedly as poets live in the lives of their creations, he desired, like Faust, to possess flesh and blood reality in a hundred different forms. Totally unable to submerge himself in conceptions, he sat like a spider in a kind of cosmic web spun from his own body, unable to find himself because he could not lose himself. He illustrates better than any other Hegel's description of the position of the artist in the modern world:

"The whole spiritual culture of the times is so embracing that he stands within this reflecting world and its relations, and cannot by any act or resolution withdraw from it."

How simple, how natural, how childlike beside this is the poet's gift, the poet's function! Simple, natural, childlike because it springs from a freedom that shares the life of men only and to the same degree as it shares the universal life, gathering not reflections, but emotional intensity. Burns describes it in—

> "The simple bard, rough at the rustic plough;
> Learning his tuneful trade from every bough."

And I know nothing more suggestive of it than Bede's description of the poet Cædmon, listening day after day to the reading of the Scriptures, and how, "ruminating over them like a pure animal, he turned them into most sweet verse."

III

But Calvinism was not the only paralyzing element. A second equally severe was his French tongue and his affiliations and to him unfortunate sympathies with the French.

During those long, gray, solitary years in Geneva the memory of his brilliant youth stood up, the student years in Germany, full of intellectual passion, the excitement of ideas, the thrill of an opening genius. They were the years during which a healthy talent, in any case, would have given itself over to acquisition. To him they represented—as no subsequent period could repre-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sent—an entire going-out from self. In Hegel, Schelling and the whole intuitive philosophy he saw a kind of refuge, too soon lost. He was born for that *milieu,* he recognized in it, then by enthusiasm and afterward through regret, the opportunity of a healthy growth, a healthy production.

Born without question for philosophy of a special kind, he suddenly found himself bound to justify this tendency before his French public and his French friends. Read the judgments passed upon him by the latter, and by the aged Matthew Arnold, and you will see them all unite upon one point—that he should have made of himself a literary critic. Amiel knew that his true work was more fundamental, more synthetic than this. He felt, vaguely stirring within, a profound attitude toward life. He could not give himself to the creation of essays, the study of single works, single characters. To him the critic's function of appraisal appeared both fragmentary and presumptuous,—the literary formula too local, too limited, however illusive might be the universal formula of which he had fluctuating glimpses. No, much as he admired the French criticism, his heart was in philosophy. Cut off by language and environment from the immense reaches of German thought, he attempted a self-development in harmony with the French tradition.

He had before him the example of Renan. And of Renan I can fancy him saying: Is that the best France can do in philosophy?—a man of immense learning, derived from Germany, who believes nothing in order that he may never be found in the wrong, who desires nothing but intellectual safety? If only Amiel himself had never felt the need of intellectual safety! If he could have trusted himself to be German, to be foolhardy to his heart's content! If only he had not tried to justify himself before the French! Of Renan he says:

"Renan has a keen love for science, but he has a still keener love for good writing . . . . and on this point I am very much with him, for a beautiful piece of writing is beautiful by virtue of a kind of truth which is truer than any mere record of authentic facts." That is a sufficiently fair and reasonable judgment for a literary artist, a critic, an essayist. But considering its implications in the case of Amiel, it seems to me a quibble, a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

piece of self-trickery. For is he prepared to follow Renan when the latter consistently preserves the same tone in the region of spiritual truth? Is he prepared to say, as Renan would have said, that beautiful writing here too is beautiful by virtue of a kind of truth which is truer than any mere record of authentic *sentiments?* I think he would have said, at this point, that truth does not require so many words to describe it.

Disillusion with Amiel does not, in fact, reach its logical extreme: style in this writer does not become the dominant note. That is because, in the presence of spiritual truth, human nature, the instinct toward happiness, his preoccupation ceases to be a purely intellectual one—at heart he is a poet. Human nature has, in short, its defence against the disillusioned intelligence which perceives everywhere futility, emptiness, and vain pretension. Writers like Renan, and more especially Anatole France, who have reached the final sophistication, sterilize all purely intellectual opposition and reply. But it can still be said of them, as Pascal said: "They have not risen from the order of thought to the order of charity." And Amiel says of himself:

"Deep within this ironical and disappointed being of mine there is a child hidden,—a frank, sad, simple creature, who believes in the ideal, in love, in holiness and all the angelic superstitions."

What is the distinction in tone? Like Renan, like Anatole France, Amiel says that he "contemplates the finite from the angle of the infinite." Yet he does so without a touch of levity. The individual soul still has its weight, still asserts in the face of the universe that nothing is greater than a conscious atom.

IV

Amiel speaks continually of the illusion of his life. He says that men pursue illusion rather than truth, and he adds:

"A little blindness is necessary if life is to be carried on, and illusion is the universal spring of movement. Complete disillusion would mean absolute immobility. He who has deciphered the secret and read the riddle of finite life escapes from the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

great wheel of existence; he has left the world of the living—he is already dead. . . . What saves us from the sorceries of Maia is conscience. . . . In these Brahmanic aspirations what becomes of the subordination of the individual to duty? Pleasure may lie in ceasing to be individual, but duty lies in performing the microscopic tasks allotted to us."

It was this idea of duty which provided Amiel with an excuse for cheating his destiny, which kept him to his microscopic tasks, gave over this poet, born for sublime works, to the intricate and trifling virtuosities of translation. If the profession of teaching had been his true rôle, capable of involving his true energies, we should not have cause to regret that duty ruled the grand as well as the small issues of his life. Only in his last few weeks did Amiel rise above the compunction-philosophy, and only then, too late! was he prepared to accept illusion and to live, not in the universal reality, but in ideas and in affections.

If, too late for poetry, he had still released himself from the negative idea of duty in time to survive the release, it seems that he would have given himself over wholly to contemplation. He would have passed beyond the incessant compromise with literature and literary expression—which he always regarded as a weakness, having radically unfitted himself for it—and would have discovered in a state of entire passiveness, of entire silence, something like completeness. Who could have regretted this? We should have lost the *Journal,* it is true, and Amiel would probably never have existed for us. But it seems to me that, in considering books and men, there is always one great lesson a generous criticism wishes to derive: how far do they enlarge our conception of human destiny, how far do they increase the human scale, add to the number of ways in which personality can achieve itself? Criticism and history, have, like tragedy, their *katharsis.* They present, the one as regards individuals, the other as regards the race, the purgation of human life from its alloy, its obstructions. In history we see the whole species rising *en masse* from nature, asserting itself, winnowing itself, moulding itself ever more and more closely to the scheme of its own special aspirations. Criticism does the same *à propos* of special men, special works. Looking toward a final assimilation

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of all the perfections it watches for each individual perfection.

Why is it so immensely satisfactory that such men as Plato, or Dante, or Goethe have lived? Because in their complete self-realization they are, so to speak, an earnest of the human faculty. Nevertheless they do not comprise the whole gallery, so full of unfinished pictures. They show us that the complete is possible—that is all. And just so far as any personality tends toward this completeness the range and the ideal of life are broadened. Life, we feel, ought to be of such a character that every personality can be free to realize itself. And it is only by the study of personality that we can understand the obstructions that exist in the world and the methods of removing them. The records of incomplete personalities are thus, in a sense, valuable —they are valuable as precepts. But more valuable than precepts are examples, and only the complete life is a true example. Literary expression is only one of the hundred ways by which personality projects itself beyond finite conditions and completes itself, so to speak, in the space that surrounds things. It lays the infinite under contribution, makes it complementary to the finite and gives personality the shadowy completeness through imagination which it would lack in subjective reality. The soul completes itself in many ways, but always through some such union of itself with the infinite. Just as Dante and Goethe are complete through poetry, so the seer is complete through contemplation. In both cases the infinite, as it were, comes to meet the finite, joins issue with it, and erases its limitations. That is why, in the case of Amiel, we resent the obstruction, the double obstruction,—a creed that prevented him from becoming a poet, a race that prevented him from becoming a seer.

V

If—since everyone has chosen to use this word in relation to Amiel—if he had remained in Germany! He was not, as I think, one of those diffusive souls requiring limitation, who could have been, so to speak, trimmed into shape by the French atmosphere. He was, on the contrary, one of those diffusive souls who require only that their diffusiveness may be complete and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

may be justified. I see him, in later years, walking, as he often walked, in holiday tours, along the misty beaches of the North Sea, under the gray sky, listening to the slow lapping of the waves. It is an exile walking there! a drifting fragment of the Germanic soul dragged back year after year into the chattering Latin world. Yes, I do not doubt that if he had remained in Germany he would have found salvation after the manner of the Germans. That essentially fluid mind of his would have found a way, in the German tongue, to crystallize itself. Perhaps he would have produced a synthetic philosophy, based upon intuition,—in other words, the philosophy of a poet.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED